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CONFIDENTIAL.

(8354.)

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ASIATIC TURKEY.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 8202.]

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ERRATUM.

Page 93, No. 105, line 1. For "25th ultimo" read "26th April."

Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. February 1905.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Asiatic Turkey.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 8202.]

No. 1.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 4, 1904.)

(No. 846.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 28, 1903.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch which has been received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, reporting on a journey made by him to Marash and Payas.

Your Lordship will observe with reference to my despatch No. 827 of the 15th instant that Captain Townshend appears to have been favourably impressed with the manner in which the inmates of the prison at Payas were treated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Vice-Consul Townshend to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 48.)
Sir, *Adana, December 4, 1903.*

PURSUANT to my telegram of yesterday's date, I have the honour to inform you that I have returned to the Vice-Consulate at Mersina, having made a journey with your sanction to Marash. I did not go to Aintab, as the latter town being in three days' quarantine I did not think it suitable to waste so much time for the sake of going there on this occasion.

The route I followed was from Adana to Sis, Kars-Bazar, Dungelé, Marash, El Oghlou, Bagche, Osmanieh, Dört Yol, Ayas, Missis, Adana.

I shall at once prepare and forward my military report on this route.

At Marash I was impressed rather unfavourably with the condition of affairs.

I was received there with every courtesy by the Mutessarif, Hassan Husni Pasha, and by the other officials, but I learned that the authorities are collecting the taxes from the Armenian population for the last twenty years. Many of the receipts of these moneys were destroyed in the massacre at Marash, and others in a fire which occurred in the bazar some fifteen years ago; yet those Armenians not in possession of receipts are obliged to pay the amount in full, or to have their goods seized in default.

The method employed is to send zaptiehs to the market every morning to seize every Armenian they see and bring him to the Serai, where he is often kept waiting till the late afternoon before his case is gone into, even though he may owe nothing, and be eventually released.

These proceedings ceased entirely for the two days that I spent in Marash, but no doubt recommenced on my departure.

I am not aware whether the French Vice-Consul there has taken any steps in the matter.

On Sunday, the 29th ultimo, I stayed at Dört Yol to rest horses, and took the opportunity of going to Payas, which is only two hours distant from Dört Yol, in order to see the prison. I saw about 250 prisoners, the large majority of whom appeared to be in good health, and to be enjoying a considerable amount of liberty. I was, however, informed that others were confined and chained in cells for having attempted escape or offered violence. Not knowing your Excellency's wishes in the matter, I did not insist upon seeing these latter prisoners. I spent about one hour in the prison, and no attempt was made to prevent the inmates from conversing with me, yet none of them made any complaint whatever, and on the whole I was favourably impressed with their treatment.

As regards topographical work, I made as good a road report as I could manage without exciting too much curiosity, and took astronomical observations at most of my halting places, though I found it very difficult to do so, and in some instances had to abandon the attempt owing to the crowd of questioning people which collected, and I have reason to think that my movements were closely watched.

The country seemed quiet and orderly except between Osmanieh and Payas, where I met a patrol of zaptiehs searching for thieves, who had recently killed one of the zaptiehs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. F. TOWNSHEND, *Captain.*

No. 2.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 4, 1904.)

(No. 851.) *Constantinople, December 20, 1903.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 676 of the 16th October last, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting on the progress in the construction of the Hejaz Railway.

Your Lordship will observe that, according to Mr. Richards' information, the project of a branch from Mâan to Akaba has now been shelved, if not definitely abandoned, although it was at one time really entertained and an engineer had been deputed to survey the line of country between those two places.

Mr. Richards calls attention to the statement in certain Turkish papers that Indian Moslems generally have already contributed 5,000,000 rupees to the Hejaz Railway fund, and that the Moslems of Hyderabad have offered to contribute a sum of about the same amount on condition that three-fifths of this sum shall be spent on the construction of a branch line between Jedda and Mount Arafat (near Mecca).

In my despatch No. 656 of the 9th October last, I had the honour to transmit a newspaper extract reporting an offer by the Nyzam of Hyderabad of 5,000,000 rupees contributed by his Moslem subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Consul Richards to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 91.) *Damascus, December 15, 1903.*

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Acting Consul Monahan's despatch No. 74 of the 7th October, I have the honour to report as follows concerning the progress in the construction of the Hejaz Railway.

As already reported, the Damascus–Amman section of the line—a distance of 237 kilom. (148 miles)—is now open for traffic, there being five goods trains and two passenger trains there and back every week. I understand that the traffic receipts are steadily increasing, the lowest estimate of their total amount per month being £T. 600,

while persons, inclined perhaps to exaggerate, maintain that they now reach a sum of £T. 2,000 per mensem. I think that one may safely put them at £T. 1,000 a-month. On this section, there are four stations which are completely built, viz., at Deráa, Mezerib, Nessib, and Mafrak, while at three other points, viz., Khirbet-es-Semra, Zerka, and Amman the construction of the stations has nearly reached completion. Ballast, however, has not been laid over the whole distance.

Beyond Amman, the rails have been laid as far as a place called Debáa, a distance of 66 kilom. (41 miles). Beyond Debáa, the earthworks are completed for another 38 kilom. (23¾ miles) to a spot known as Katranch, and from there for another 70 kilom. (43¾ miles) to a place called Anazeh the construction of earthworks is now going on. The rails are at present being laid on the Debáa–Katranch section, and it is understood that as soon as this latter place is reached, the operation may be continued without interruption to Anazeh, seeing that the earthworks will by that time have been completed up to that point. From here (Anazeh) to Mâan—a distance of 57 kilom. (35⅝ miles)—the task of constructing earthworks will very shortly be commenced, if, indeed, it has not already been begun.

To resume, rails have been laid, and so, it may be said, the line is more or less completed over a distance of 303 kilom.—nearly 190 miles—while over a further distance of 108 kilom. (67½ miles) the earthworks are more or less completed and the rails are being laid.

On the whole, therefore, the progress with the work has been fairly satisfactory during the past year. In the future, however, it will be very much slower, because, owing to the fact that the French Company have refused to allow material for the construction of the line to be carried over their Beirût–Mezerib Railway, except at most exorbitant and, it may be said, prohibitive rates, the Turkish Government have decided to press on the construction of the Deráa–Haifa branch of the line with all possible speed, so as to import their materials by that route. As a matter of fact, the work on the Deráa–Jordan Valley section of this line has already been begun, and it is calculated by Herr Meissner, the chief engineer, that the whole of this branch line will be completed in from fourteen to sixteen months.

As regards the much-talked-of branch from Mâan to Akaba, I have reason to believe that, although at one time the project was really entertained—and indeed I know as a fact that one of the engineers had been told off to survey the line of country between these two places, with a view to the construction of the line—it has now been shelved, if not definitely abandoned.

As regards the prospects of completing this railway as far as Medina and Mecca, I am inclined to believe that they are much brighter than they were two years ago, when such a consummation was ridiculed even by persons who were in possession of information which enabled them to gauge more or less accurately the possibilities of the enterprise. In my case, if it is abandoned in two or three years' time, when, at the present rate of progress, half of the line will have been constructed, it will not be, I venture to say, from lack of funds. This was the obstacle which all along has been most apprehended; but from information obtained in reliable quarters and from a consideration of the various fiscal sources, which are now being drawn upon with a view to the formation of a railway fund, there would appear to be every probability that the money will be forthcoming when required. The estimated cost of the enterprise is now put by Herr Meissner himself at 5,000,000*l.* at most, whereas at one time this sum was deemed by experts to be the minimum expenditure possible.

In addition to the amount which has been subscribed throughout the Mohammedan world, and which has nearly reached a total of £T. 750,000, there are the following sources of revenue, most of which have been specially created for the purpose of the formation of this fund:—

1. A poll-tax of 5 piastres on every Moslem head of a family throughout the Empire. It has been calculated that this will yield at least £T. 100,000 per annum.

2. A tax to be levied on a sliding scale on the recipients of all honorific distinctions, according to their importance. Seeing that the race for decorations is as keenly pursued now as ever it was, this is likely to prove a very fertile source of income.

3. Half the proceeds of the taxes on charcoal and wood, which are said to yield some £T. 50,000 annually.

4. A tax, consisting of a 1-piastre stamp, which has to be affixed to all Petitions and other documents presented to the authorities.

5. A tax, consisting of stamps of different values, which have to be affixed to all documents connected with the hire of houses, contracts, leases, &c.

6. A tax of 1 per 1,000 on the value of certain land and house property

when sold, and the title-deeds obtained from the authorities of the "Tapou" Department.

7. Another tax, in the form of a 1-piastre stamp, to be affixed to the Ilm-ou-Khaber (official receipt) provided by the "Mouktar" and members of every Parish Commission, to any person wishing to sell land or house property.

8. A further tax, being a certain percentage (not certain how much) on the value of land or house property when sold, and the provisional "Hodjeh," or title-deed, is delivered.

9. The proceeds of the sale of the skins of all animals killed on the occasion of the Courban Bairam.

10. Proceeds of the sale of fancy cigarette cases made of gelatine and sold by the Tobacco Régie agents for 20 paras each, in addition to the cost of cigarettes which they contain.

11. The revenue obtained from the net receipts of that portion of the line which is already open for traffic, and which even now is, as stated above, put at £T. 1,000 (gross receipts) per month.

There may be, and probably are, other sources of revenue of which I am ignorant.

Your Excellency will understand that a large annual sum will be obtained by these means, and which may safely be put at £T. 250,000, if it does not exceed that amount.

Such a sum, obtained annually, will, undoubtedly, cover all the expenses of construction, so that, whatever is obtained over and above that—*e.g.*, by means of subscription—will be so much to the good, for the purchase of rolling-stock, &c.

I may mention in this connection that, according to a statement contained in a recent issue of the Damascus paper "Esh Sham" (which itself is a quotation from the Constantinople paper "Sabah"), Indian Moslems generally have already contributed a sum of 5,000,000 rupees (considerably over 300,000*l.*) towards the Hejaz Railway fund, while the Moslem inhabitants of the State of Haidarabad alone are said to have offered to tax themselves to the extent of 6¼ per cent. of their total wealth, which it has been calculated would produce another 5,000,000 rupees, on condition that three-fifths of this sum should be spent on the construction of a branch line connecting Jeddah with Mount Arafat (near Mecca)—a distance of 60 miles—while the remaining two-fifths should be allocated to the general railway fund. I am of opinion, however, that these statements should be received with caution.

In conclusion, I might mention a rumour which is gaining currency, and which is to the effect that the Turkish Government, in order to induce the French Company to lower their freights for the carriage of Hejaz Railway construction materials from Beirout to Mezarib, have offered them a kilometric guarantee, the amount of which, however, is not known.

Your Excellency will understand that the Company's grievance is that the Government have constructed a railway parallel with their Hauran line, in direct violation of a clause of the Agreement existing between the two Contracting Parties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 3.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 8.) *Constantinople, January 8, 1904.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 840, of the 22nd December, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, on the subject of the ill-treatment of the United States' Vice-Consul at Alexandretta by the harbour police in that town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Consul Barnham to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 78.) *Aleppo, December 30, 1903.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency, with reference to my despatch No. 71, Confidential, of the 10th instant, that His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Alexandretta has reported that, in response to an invitation of Mr. Davis, the United States' Consul, he had, with the other members of the Consular Corps, attended an official ceremony at the American Consulate at which the Kaimakam made a full apology to the Consul and Rear-Admiral Cotton for the ill-treatment to which Mr. Davis had been subjected at the hands of the harbour police in connection with the case of the arrest of Attarian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 4.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 9.) *Constantinople, January 9, 1904.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting as to the financial straits in which that vilayet now finds itself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Consul Richards to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 94.) *Damascus, December 28, 1903.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Vali, being in very urgent need of money in order to make the customary Bairam payment of a month's salary to all Government functionaries, whether civil or military, appealed to Constantinople some short time since for pecuniary assistance, to which a reply has just been received in the form of an order on the Damascus branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank for £T. 10,000. I am assured that the acquisition of these funds and their prompt distribution only just came in time to prevent what might have proved a serious outbreak on the part of the troops stationed in the Hauran, who not only had received no pay for many months but are being miserably fed and no less miserably clad. I am informed on good authority that several officers left their posts in that district without leave during the last few months, and came to Damascus with the object of pressing their claims for arrears of pay, in which, of course, they failed, but although they were ordered back to their regiments by the Mushir, they were not punished for this gross breach of discipline.

Here in Damascus I know that the destitution, especially of the junior officers, is such that many of them have been known to beg in person of wealthy Moslem and even Christian notables, being quite content to get a mejidieh or two to keep themselves and their families from starvation. One case was reported to me of a Captain, who had seated himself in uniform in a public thoroughfare with a small table by his side, on which were placed a pen, ink, and paper, and a notice in which the public was informed that he (the said captain) was ready to write petitions and other documents at a much lower rate than the ordinary professional "Arzuhuljis" (writers of petitions). He was summoned before the Mushir and severely reprimanded, but not otherwise punished, his plea being extreme destitution.

I understand that most of the officers of high rank have received their full pay, but that from the grade of Major down there are very few of them who are not from five to six months in arrears. When the smallness of their actual pay, even when

received, is considered, your Excellency will realize the miserable condition of all those who have no private means, i.e., of the great majority. The marvel is, considering the up-bringing, associations, and political opinions of many of them, that they have not mutinied long ago. They would undoubtedly have done so in any other army in the world.

The men are suffering equally with their officers as regards pay, but so long as they are actually fed and clothed, which of course they are, after a fashion, they accept their lot with more or less sullen resignation. It is only when the rations run short and their uniforms hang about them in rags, as has been the case with so many in the Hauran, that they venture to give expression to their discontent, a rare incident enough with men of their race and religion.

In connection with the subject of the very serious financial straits in which the Vali has found himself of late, I might mention the fact that he has appropriated a sum of £ T. 27,000, being part of the proceeds of the tithes of the Sandjaks of Hamah and Damascus, which, together with those of the Akka Sandjak, have been set aside for the payment of the kilometric guarantee of the Ryak–Hamah Railway. M. Rafinski, the Inspector of the Public Debt, who was here at the time on tour, protested against this, from his point of view, high-handed and unjustifiable proceeding, but he was informed by Nazim Pasha that he must have money somehow, and that he would take it where he could get it. The matter was reported telegraphically by the Inspector to the Central Administration in Constantinople, where it will be arranged no doubt with the Ministry of Finance. It has been suggested to me, however, that, as the whole amount required for the guarantee is something under £ T. 130,000, from which may be deducted, say, £ T. 20,000, representing the net profits of the Ryak–Hamah Railway (I understand that about £ T. 8,000 net profits were realized last year in the course of five months' traffic), whereas the total tithes of the three sandjaks are estimated at £ T. 100,000, the Vali might consider himself justified in retaining a certain percentage of the difference between the two sums, proportionately to the value of the tithe contribution of his two sandjaks, which together produce some £ T. 115,000.

At all events this explanation appears fairly plausible. The financial stress here is certainly greater than it ever was before in the opinion of all the best judges, but it does not follow, in this country, that anything very abnormal will come of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 5.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 32.) *Foreign Office, January 28, 1904.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 26 of the 19th instant, reporting that you had again called the attention of the Porte to the question of certain privileges and honours to be accorded to the newly-appointed Nestorian Patriarch, and that the 2nd Class of the Order of the Medjidieh had now been conferred upon Mar Shimun.

I have learned with satisfaction the result of your Excellency's action in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 6.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 1.)

(No. 32.) *Constantinople, January 29, 1904.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on a journey which he recently undertook north of Lake Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 43.) *Van, December 24, 1903.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to give your Excellency a short account of the journey I recently made with your permission north of the Lake.

On this journey I visited the Cazas of Arjish, Adeljivass, Serai, and Hamidie (Khosbab), in this vilayet; of Melasgird and Bulanik (Gopi), in the Bitlis Vilayet, and of Alatab (Dutakht), Diadin, Kara-Kilissé, and the Sanjak of Bayezid, in the Erzeroum Vilayet. The country is quiet, but there is very general discontent with the Government, enhanced by the new taxes, as explained in my No. 38 of the 11th November. There is nothing very significant in this dissatisfaction, though it is shared by Turk, Kurd, and Christian. It is perennial here, and though the feeling is, generally, that any change would be welcome, yet that nothing can be done to improve matters.

A satisfactory state of affairs prevailed in the Caza of Arjish, where the Kaimakam, Mehmed Tewfik, appeared to deal fairly between Christian and Mussulman, and not be afraid of the Kurds. Since my visit he has been transferred to the Konia Vilayet.

A very different state of things prevails in Adeljivass, where Hussein Pasha, of Patnotz, a Haidérani Chieftain, does what he likes. He is one of the biggest men in this country, and his position north of the Lake corresponds to that of Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq in Shemdinan and Geover, and to that of the late Mustafa Pasha about Jezire.

The Cadi at Adeljivass, who was Acting Kaimakam during my visit, told me that the Government was Hussein Pasha; that they were all in his hands, and that litigants knew it was no use troubling him (the Cadi), but were in the habit of taking their cases direct to Hussein Pasha for decision. He said that Hussein Pasha was always supported by the Vali, who depends on him, as he does on Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq, for money to help carry on the Government.

Though it is a pity that so much power should be thus irregularly exercised by a man who might well abuse it, yet it has the advantage of checking tyrannies and depredations by lesser Chiefs whom the Government would probably not take the trouble to control; for in all this region Hussein Pasha's word is law, and he keeps the other Kurds in order as long as it suits his purpose to do so. The general feeling was that it was better to have only Hussein Pasha to satisfy than to be at the mercy of several smaller men.

This comfortable feeling is not shared by the local officials, who find themselves deprived of all power, for good or evil, nor by those who happen to stand in the way of some want of Hussein Pasha's. For instance, I found he was building, and had practically completed, a new house for himself in the Armenian village of Kojeri. The inhabitants of this village brought me a Petition, secretly, to say that [illegible] Pasha, the better to build his house, was taking stones from their church, and from which I learned that it was a parallel case to others to which I have had the honour to draw your Excellency's attention, viz., that he had no right to go to the village at all, but that, in going there and building a house, he took possession of it and became its owner. My visit was a purely fortuitous one, but the guilty consciences of Hussein Pasha and of the Vali and other officials who allow him to do what he likes, at once persuaded them that I had gone there on purpose to inquire into the matter; and I afterwards found that my arrival caused a considerable stir in the dovecot.

Though I was sorry for the villagers, previous experience has shown me that there is not much one can do in these cases—there are many of them, and I had no intention of taking up the matter; but when I got back to Van, I found many curious reports as to what I had said and done to Hussein Pasha; and the Vali, as soon as he saw me, broached the subject himself, saying that he was very much surprised to hear that Hussein Pasha was building a house in Kojeri; that he had at once given orders for it to be stopped, had I seen the house, &c. Meanwhile, I have no doubt that Hussein Pasha has been allowed to finish his house in peace.

From Adeljivass to Melasgird, and on the northern and western slopes of Sipan, are many Circassian Settlements. Most of these suffered in the earthquake of last April, and now some of their villages are entirely deserted. The inhabitants are apparently to be settled in the neighbourhood of Khinis. The Circassians also told me that Hussein Pasha was the real Governor of the Caza, but that, as he is responsible for all, good and ill, that is done by his men, things are better thus than where there are many Aghas,

each his own master. However, no Kurd, even Hussein Pasha, cares about interfering unduly with Circassians.

Hussein Pasha is now the most important Haideranli Chief. This is by far the largest Kurdish tribe about here, extending from the region of Adeljivass, through Abagha, and over the Persian border. Their Eastern sections are not under Hussein Pasha, and the titular Chief of all the Haideranli is Kop Mehmed Sidiq, of Abagha, to whom, I am informed, even Hussein Pasha would yield the "pas" at any Kurdish social function, should they ever chance to meet at one. However, they do not have much to do with each other, and the Haideranli may be roughly divided into three portions—those of Persia, of Abagha, and of Hussein Pasha. I have reported Mehmed Sidiq's grievance against the Government, his probable removal to Persia, and the consequent changes among the Persian Haideranli and those of Abagha in my No. 38 of the 11th November.

North of the Haideranli are the Hassananli, always at enmity with them. These last have the reputation of being very good fighters, but there is no paramount Chief among them; and though some successfully defy Hussein Pasha, others, having been worsted in fights in their own tribe, have come to him, and are now counted as his men, *e.g.*, Muhammad Emin Bey of Shebo, Kaïmakam of the 28th Regiment of Hamidié. Other Haideranli Chiefs of this district who look to Hussein Pasha are Emin Pasha and Haji Timur Pasha.

In Melasgird, which suffered so severely in the recent earthquake, I found that little had been done in the way of rebuilding; the Kaïmakam and other officials were in tents, and temporary wooden huts had been erected for the post, telegraph, and Government offices. The Kaïmakam told me that they had commenced rebuilding, but that a second earthquake had undone their work; and as small shocks were still being regularly felt, they had decided to do nothing more, and that the Government would go to winter quarters in a neighbouring village, and return to their tents here next summer. It is a pity, as Melasgird is an important station on the Van–Erzeroum post and telegraph routes, and this state of things will probably lead to much unnecessary delay during the winter. I was also informed here that a fresh immigration of Muhajjirs from Russia, chiefly Circassians—500 or 600 families—is expected, and that arrangements are being made to settle them, chiefly in Bulanik and Khinis.

Since the earthquake the head-quarters of the 2nd Brigade of Hamidié has been transferred from Melasgird to Gop, in the Bulanik Plain; and during my visit, Ahmed Pasha, who is Ferik of the 4th Cavalry Division, and, as such, Commandant of all the Hamidié Kurds, was in the latter place.

I found that the people about Melasgird and in Bulanik had a grateful recollection of Mehmed Ali Bey, Commandant of a Hamidié regiment, who had been Acting Commandant of this brigade. He appears to have been an excellent official, and to have exerted himself to discipline the neighbouring Aghas, and to protect the villagers. Unfortunately, he was transferred to Mardin last September.

After passing through Pattotz, which had suffered even more, in proportion, from the earthquake, than Melasgird, I visited the Aintab Caza of the Erzeroum Vilayet. This district includes the Sare Gol Plain, famous about here for its soil, which is said to be even better than that of the Bulanik Plain, which is the principal granary of these parts. There are only three or four Armenian villages in this caza, most of the settled inhabitants being Muhajjirs of Turcoman origin. They are called Karapapak, part of them being from the Caucasus and part from Azerbaijan, and their Settlements extend into the Alashgird Plain. Some of them are Shujas. They are better agriculturists than the Circassians and Kurds, and good gardeners as well. I have already informed your Excellency, in my No. 35 of the 27th October, of the détour I made on account of the information I had received of an incursion of Armenian revolutionists from Russia.

Ascending the Alashgird Plain, I reached Bayezid, where there are a Persian Consul and a Russian Vice-Consul. The Mutessarif, Hassan Vefik, impressed me favourably. The Sanjak of Bayezid is sub-divided as follows:—

Caza.	Markez.	Kaimakam.
Karaköprü	Karaköprü.	Salah Effendi (acting).
Diadin.	Diadin.	Mehmed Tewfik Bey.
Alashgird.	Tepek Kale.	Bekir Effendi (acting).
Aladja.	Dutakht.	Mehmed Hamdi Bey.

And it extends from the Persian frontier on the east to the Delibaba Pass on the west.

The main caravan road from Erzeroum to Persia follows the Delibaba Pass and the length of the Alashgird Plain, thus traversing the length of the sanjak. It is an important trade route, and the Mutessarif told me it was his great object to improve this road and keep it in repair. There was certainly a good deal of work being done on it, not before it was needed. By his orders, the Kilij Gedik, over which runs the most direct route from Van to Erzeroum, was also being improved. The Kaïmakam at Dutakht seemed to take an interest in this work, and accompanied me for some hours in order to show me personally the blasting operations in the Gedik. They were anxious to get this portion finished before the winter set in, as they hoped by this means to keep the road open this winter. As usual, the labour supply was insufficient, and probably also the money to pay for it, but it seemed to me that road-making and road-repairing are a good deal more advanced in the Erzeroum Vilayet than in that of Van.

In the Alashgird Plain are several large and thriving villages and many Armenians, but the number of these last was reduced during the massacres, and they say that the Plain has not yet attained to the pitch of prosperity which it enjoyed before those events.

I afterwards saw something of the Adamanli and Jellali Kurds, both of whom are Hamidié, and visited the Plains of Abagha and Akhorik. I visited Chihoukli, the residence of Jehangir Agha, the Chief of the Yezidis about here. He is subordinate to Ali Pasha, of Baadra, near Mosul, who is the spiritual and temporal Head of the Yezidi "millet," and sends him a regular tithe. The Yezidis here are considered "ashiret," and have nothing to distinguish them from the surrounding Kurds, except that they give soldiers to Government instead of supplying Hamidié. I found arrangements being made to settle a proportion of Haideranli immigrants from Persia among the Yezidis. Fuller details of this immigration were given in my No. 38 of the 11th November.

The country round Serai from Akhorik to Khoshab, and east as far as the Persian frontier, is inhabited by four offshoots of the great Shekak tribe—the Muguri, Takhuri, Shemsiki, and Milan. The distribution of these four tribes, their Aghas, and the Hamidié regiments which they respectively contribute, are given in the Hamidié lists which I forwarded with my No. 35 of the 31st October. The only point worth remarking about them here is that the Takhuri are in a very bad way, by reason of their long-standing feud with the Haideranli (No. 19 of the 25th August, 1902). They have now only eight villages in Akhorik, and though they nominally supply a complete regiment of Hamidié, they cannot have more than 200 fighting men, and these are divided into two hostile parties, the one of Hussein Bey, the real Chief of the tribe; the other of his cousin, Sultan Agha. Both Hussein Bey and Sultan Agha have lately been in prison in Van to induce them to keep the peace. There is now a small infantry guard in each of the Takhuri villages to protect them against the Haideranli.

During the whole of my journey I had good opportunities of studying the Hamidié; and the more I see of this force, the more convinced am I of its comparative uselessness. Some of the regiments in reality exist only on paper; arms have not been issued to them, and I doubt if they would be readily procurable when wanted, though the Commandants and other Turkish officers always make out that they are stored at Erzeroum and Erzinjian ready for immediate issue. Of the two brigades in the Van Vilayet at least four regiments, the 56th, 58th, 59th, 60th, have never received any rifles from the Government.

Of course, all these Kurds have their horses, but clothing, accoutrements, and other necessities for man and horse on a campaign are left to look after themselves.

The Military Commandants are not sufficiently in touch with the Kurdish regiments under their commands, and they never have an opportunity to drill, manœuvre, or train them. While the junior regular officers attached to the Hamidié regiments have no work to do, and do not take the slightest interest in their charges; they do not even live generally at the "merkez" of the regiment, as the Commandants do, but lonf in Van, Bashkala, Kara-Kilissé, &c., as the case may be. If an officer knows the number of the regiment to which he belongs, and the name of the tribe which supplies it, that is probably the extent of his knowledge, and inquiry will reveal that he is ignorant of the name of the Agha of the tribe, of his residence, of the tribal officers, and of nearly everything concerning the regiment.

The Turks say that the Hamidié are "irregular" (which they certainly are), and are not intended to take the field as a trained body of cavalry, and that want of discipline and lack of training do not much matter in troops intended only to harass the enemy's communications.

I do not believe the Hamidié can fulfil any useful object whatever when it comes to fighting; the prospect of pillage might keep them together at the commencement,

but there is no strong feeling either of loyalty, or of affection, or of devotion to a cause to give them cohesion, or to replace the discipline and training so hopelessly absent; and it is probable that most of them would desert the Turkish cause, or, at any rate, return to their villages on the first sign of defeat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. TYRRELL. *Captain.*

No. 7.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 1.)

(No. 44.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 26, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting-Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the death of Husni Bey, Vali of Bitlis, on the 13th instant, and stating that orders have been received by the Vali of Erzeroum to disband all the Hamidiehs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Acting-Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 3.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, January* 16, 1904.

MR. VICE-CONSUL HEATHCOTE will doubtless have informed your Excellency by telegram of the death, on the 13th instant, of the Vali of Bitlis, Husni Bey, but I would venture to express the opinion that it is of the greatest importance that his successor be not only appointed at once, but also proceed at once to his post, in spite of the season, without allowing the military party, who are already too powerful in the vilayet, time to obtain a hold on its affairs which it will be impossible to shake off.

I hear that, as it is, the Commandant has appointed himself Acting-Governor.

Mehemed Husni Bey, formerly Kaïmakam of Baibourt in this vilayet, and lately appointed Mutessarif of Chenj in the Vilayet of Bitlis, is now at Kharput on his way to his new post. I am informed that he is a competent official, honest and energetic, and that he aspires to the Governorship of the province. As he is on the spot, he might, to avoid delay, be appointed Vali *ad interim*, even though he might later in the year have to be replaced by another.

The Vali informed me on Thursday last that he had received orders from Constantinople to disband all the Hamidiehs at once. I understand that the Irade was issued in consequence of a protest from the Russian Embassy against the employment of Hamidiehs on the frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 8.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 1.)

(No. 47. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 26, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that Ferid Bey has been appointed Vali of Bitlis in the room of Husni Bey, who died on the 13th instant.

His Excellency has for many years past held the position of Chief Secretary to the Governor of Pera, and some four years ago was appointed a member of the Council of State.

I understand that the names of three desirable candidates were submitted to the Sultan by the Grand Vizier, but they did not include Ferid Bey, who apparently owes his nomination to the interest of Izzet Pasha, the Sultan's Secretary.

Opinions vary as to the capacities of Ferid Bey. I exercised considerable pressure upon the Grand Vizier with a view to the appointment of the best official possible under the critical conditions likely to prevail in those parts next spring, but although his Highness recommended in Hamdi Bey an energetic and experienced official, his candidate was not accepted by the Palace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 9.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received February* 9.)

(No. 54.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 31, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting the turbulent behaviour of soldiers in that town.

The outbreak appears to have been one of considerable gravity, as showing the precarious position of the Christian population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 2.)
Sir, *Van, January* 8, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report an affair which has just occurred here, which is interesting as showing the state of discipline which prevails among the soldiers, and how easily regrettable events might arise from very small causes.

Yesterday a quarrel arose between the Quartermaster of the 1st Battalion of the 30th Regiment, and the contractor who supplies the regiment with rice, butter, &c. It is said that the latter refused to continue supplies—probably the military authorities owe him money, and he sees no chance of getting it. The Quartermaster struck the contractor, who happens to be also a Mussulman. Had he been a Christian nothing more would have happened. As it was he felt aggrieved, and complained to the Ferik, who called the offending Quartermaster before him, abused him, and, it is said, struck him. The latter threw down his jacket and his sword, said he was no longer an officer, as he had been struck, and ran out of the Ferik's house to make his grievance public. He was arrested and imprisoned. The affair was reported to the Binbashi commanding the battalion—one, Mehmed Effendi, who is not in favour with the Ferik. He immediately collected the men of his battalion, told them that there was nothing for them to eat, that the Ferik wished them to starve, &c., and advised them to go out and get what they could themselves, as he could do nothing for them.

Thereupon a mob of some 300 soldiers swept down the main road leading to the city, ill-treating and robbing every one who happened to be in their way. It was towards evening, when the merchants and business men, mostly Armenians, are returning from the city to the gardens. These were relieved of their watches, money, and valuables, and beaten and ill-treated according to the whim of the particular soldiers who got hold of them. The Ferik, who came out of his house to see what was going on, with difficulty got back there in safety, and barricaded himself. A guard-house on the road was overwhelmed, and the officer in charge beaten. Two other Turkish officers, Binbashis, who happened to be in the way of the mob, and who apparently remonstrated, had their heads broken, and are now in hospital in a critical state. Order seems to have been restored by the resolute action of Edhem Bey, Tabur Aghassi of Gendarmerie, who met the mob and turned it back before it reached the city. The Vali, too, behaved well, and drove up the street to quiet the soldiers as soon as he heard of what was going on. He has given orders that all the gendarmes are to be held in readiness to prevent a similar occurrence, and to use force against the soldiers the moment they show signs of breaking out again. As I have not yet had an opportunity of conversing with the Vali, Ferik, or any one in authority about this, this account may not be altogether correct, and fresh light may be thrown on the origin and causes of the affair. But the chief blame would certainly seem to lie with the

Bimbashi, Mehmed Effendi. The Ferik's display of temper towards the Quartermaster was unjustifiable, but the latter and his Bimbashi had a constitutional method of bringing their complaint to superior notice, had they desired to avail themselves of it, instead of acting in the mutinous way they did.

The chief thing to be noted is that, as the soldiers were beating and robbing, they said, "This is only a foretaste of what is going to happen to you Christians in the spring," or words to that effect.

The people have been considerably frightened by this event, and the bazaar has remained closed to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL.

No. 10.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 57.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 2, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting on the condition of affairs in the vilayet during the year 1903.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Consul Longworth to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Trebizond, January 18, 1904.*

IN continuation of my quarterly and annual series of reports, I would here attempt to describe further, as follows, the condition of affairs in this vilayet.

The year 1903 is likely to be long associated in the memory of the inhabitants with the death of Cadri Bey.

The sudden demise on the 23rd January of so popular and efficient a Governor-General was widely and deeply lamented.

The loss was felt to be irreparable; and it certainly left a void difficult to fill. Reshad Bey obtained the appointment. Thus an exceptionally weak Vali succeeded a remarkably strong one. Goodness he has; but no courage and no energy. His stoic indifference, however, is more assumed than real. He shirks responsibility, but is anxious to please. Some value is set by him, moreover, on public opinion, apt though he be to find consolation in the thought that after Cadri Bey, even the ablest Administrator would have become locally the butt of adverse criticism and comparison.

On last Bairam eve two or three placards were posted up abusing his Excellency for allowing the Kaihianoglous to break the law and disturb the peace with impunity. The police removed them before they were read by the people: and as the contents were kept secret, some conjectures were rife at the time, which needlessly alarmed the Christians. An ex-officer of police was the author of the placards. He is now in gaol awaiting trial, though the rebuke administered by him is not very generally regarded as libellous and defamatory.

The Kaihianoglous are doubtless the most self-asserting family in Trebizond. Few equal them in turbulence, and none arrogate to themselves so completely the prerogative of setting the authorities at naught. The secret of their power lies in the fact that the Palace Cateress of Circassian slaves was, in the past, Zekkieh Hanim. The woman is much dreaded by even the higher officials, for she happens to possess, besides a dominant will, a very hot temper, and some physical strength. Her worthless sons are three in number. The first is a loafer, ready for any mischief; the second is openly engaged in smuggling enterprises; while the third, to prevent his again assaulting the police, has actually been made a Commissary of Police.

A great decline in public security marked the year under review. The Executive seemed all at once to lose vigour, and the lawless were not tardy to seize the opportunity. Smugglers, cattle-lifters, and freebooters resumed their old practices. Murders were common, and blood was spilt freely in even family feuds and drunken broils. The number

of lives lost is given in the Vali's list as forty-three for the whole year and for the whole vilayet. Such a Return cannot but be considered as decidedly unreliable. It only serves to show that the dependencies must have ceased to report the more ordinary and the less fragrant cases of assassination.

At and near Ordou, as well as Rizeh, various crimes followed each other in quick succession. Trebizond, for a time, was almost as bad; and, indeed, everywhere else, with the sole exception of the Samsoun district. There alone was safety to life and property maintained satisfactorily and uninterruptedly to the no little credit of the Mutessarif Hamdi Bey.

The more is the pity, therefore, that the efforts of this capable and conscientious functionary should be so deliberately and persistently ignored by the Sultan, simply because in the days gone by he chanced to be Midhat Pasha's Secretary.

The most audacious, felonious act of the year was the robbery of the Erzeroum mail. It alone stirred up the authorities to some semblance of energy and activity. The post was waylaid and stopped on the 5th October at 5 P.M. in its descent from Zigana to Hamsi Keui. A heavy fusillade from a band of Lazes brought down simultaneously horses and men. The courier, a driver, and two gendarmes were killed; while only one man out of seven escaped uninjured. All the bags were ripped open; but specie in gold only, amounting to £T. 4,535, was carried off by the brigands. None of the money has been recovered, nor have any of the real culprits been caught, though numerous were the arrests made on insufficient evidence.

The Central Government were apparently vexed mostly at the pecuniary loss the affair involved. Reshad Bey was repeatedly asked to exert himself in the matter, and he therefore went to Gumushkhaneh to conduct the search in person. Leaving Trebizond on the 22nd October, he returned on the 14th November. The journey, in its main object, proved a failure; but it enabled him to find out the more pressing needs of the district. Anxious to put the knowledge thus acquired to some useful purpose, he has embodied in a report certain proposals which the Porte would do well to sanction.

Foremost among the suggestions are those calculated to render the Erzeroum highway more secure by the establishment of telegraph offices at Jevislik, Zigana, and Ardassa; the formation of a military station with a company of troops at Zigana; and the appointment of a Mudir with a squad of gendarmes at Dildaban, a wayfarer's bazaar lying at the foot of the steep ascent to Gumushkhaneh.

The Vali's tenure of office is said to be anything but sure. He has lost, it appears, owing to the looting of the mail, the confidence of the Sultan. All public officials seem to have someone at Yildiz, and Reshad Bey's friend at Court is Tahsin Pasha. This did not save him from being treated lately with what he considers marked discourtesy.

Undue significance is evidently given to the fact that his Christian assistant, Vegleri Bey, was raised in December to his own civil grade of Bala. The recipient himself believes that the bestowal of the honour was purely meant as an indirect compliment to his father-in-law, Caratheodori Pasha. The Vali, however, thinks otherwise; and so do, very likely, the ladies of his harem. Yielding in a weak moment to the wishes of his wife and daughter, he asked for each of them the Order of the Shefakat. The coveted decorations were not obtained, though applications of the kind are seldom pigeon-holed and forgotten. Stronger minded people would perhaps have solaced themselves with the thought that to be without such marks of favour is fast becoming in Turkey a rare exception and an honourable distinction.

The gendarmerie of the vilayet consisted of 868 foot and 166 horse, including 63 officers. The police numbered 74 men and 13 Commissaries. Only 18 gendarmes and 2 policemen were Christians. Through the exertions of these forces 10 criminals were shot and 63 arrested, with apparently no struggle, for during the year only 3 of their number were killed and 2 wounded. The Trebizond gaol contained, on the 31st December, 378 Moslem and 20 Christian prisoners, among which 10 of the one and 3 of the other were women.

Those convicted in 1903 for grave offences numbered 30 from one to five years' imprisonment, 22 from five to ten, 53 from ten to fifteen, and 9 for life. There has been no glaring miscarriage of justice, but many were the innocent people kept long in custody owing chiefly to the laxity displayed in enforcing the attendance of witnesses.

The Budget of the vilayet for the Turkish financial year ending the 14th March, 1903, is herewith subjoined. An increase in the revenue will be observed. Locally, however, it did no good, for the assignments on the provincial funds exceed always the surplus, and, at times, even the receipts.

The arrears are considerable; as, in accordance with orders received in September, 40 per cent. of the civil and 35 per cent. of the military expenditures were left unpaid. Other sums are also due, such, for instance, as £ T. 6,000 out of £ T. 20,000 claimed by contractors for road mending. Unprofitable expenses were, all the same, incurred. Such was the money drawn by the Special Commission of Inspection, composed of military officers, whose tour, began early in August, ended abruptly in the middle of October, because at or near Baiburt one of the members broke his leg. If a few hundred Turkish pounds so wasted had gone to swell the Trebizond Exhibition Fund, some real benefit might have been derived. The allowance for this particular purpose was limited to £ T. 60. It is not surprising, therefore, that though the Exhibition was opened with much pomp on the occasion of the Sultan's birthday, the display of native products and industries was poor and inadequate.

Among the changes of Governors, the following should be recorded:—

Mehmed Zia Bey, the inebriate Kaimakam of Kerasond, was dismissed in October. The abler one of Unia, Ibrahim Khalil Pasha, obtained the post through his Palace friend, Hakki Bey.

Loutfi Pasha, the weak Mutessarif of Rizeh, was recalled in December. An appeal to the Sultan, addressed by half-a-dozen Lazes, caused his downfall. The appointment is still vacant.

Politically, the situation remained unaltered. Aggressive tendencies were discountenanced, and religious tolerance was more in evidence. Exiled Turks in undiminished number passed through into inland banishment; while the Armenians, in their well-being, depended largely on the venality of the smaller officials. The centralization of power seemed complete. Both Rulers and ruled resorted to the Palace for relief or advantage so readily and freely that the pivot of the provincial administration appeared to be Yildiz.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

BUDGET of the Trebizond Vilayet.

(Turkish Financial Years, 1317 and 1318.)

	1317.	1318.
	£ T.	£ T.
Revenue—		
Tithes	160,395	161,920
Land tax	80,430	80,885
Military exemption tax	44,030	44,080
Sheep tax	31,620	33,770
Title deeds and registers	6,340	10,585
Judicial fees and fines	5,365	9,210
Trade licences	5,710	5,700
Public works	5,800	5,600
Mines and forests	5,285	4,190
State lands	230	285
Sundries (direct)	5,525	5,070
,, (indirect)	4,930	4,010
Total revenue	355,160	366,285
Expenditure—		
Gendarmerie	27,050	27,000
Civil Service	22,130	20,110
Fiscal Service	15,640	19,825
Magistracy	13,750	13,860
Pensions	3,620	3,430
Police	2,080	2,710
Mines and forests	2,360	2,315
Sundries	5,600	5,525
Hamidieh	262,550	268,300
Total expenditure	355,160	366,285

No. 11.

Consul Stevens to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 2.)
My Lord, *Batoum, January 25, 1904.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the disaffection among the Armenians of the Caucasus, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Armenian Revolutionary Society continues to exhibit considerable activity in various parts of this country.

The attempted assassination of the Governor-General, Prince Golitzin, was followed, on the morning of the 18th instant, by a further attempt to murder Prince Herheulidze, the Police Master at Kars. While this latter official was proceeding to his office, as stated above, accompanied by a policeman, he was fired at by three Armenians, who were standing near the house occupied by the offices of the Armenian Ecclesiastical Administration. The Prince was not hurt, but the policeman was dangerously wounded by a bullet which passed right through his chest. Before receiving this wound, the policeman fired and wounded one of the Armenians, who was captured then and there, and gave the name of Pogos Petros Mikirtich. The other two assailants, one of whom was slightly wounded by a revolver shot fired by the Police Master, picked up a dagger which the badly wounded Armenian had dropped and both subsequently made their escape good.

A report is current that a systematic robbery, which is attributed to Armenians in connivance with persons in authority, had been taking place for some time past at the arsenal at Alexandropol; the result being that 400 boxes of cartridges, 400 revolvers, and 12 poods of dynamite are missing from the arsenal.

A day or two ago a clandestine printing press was discovered by the police authorities at Batoum. It had been installed in a half-ruined and abandoned nail factory, situated in the outskirts of the town. No arrests were made during the visit of the police to this place, which was found to be deserted; but a large quantity of type, printing ink, and other printing accessories were seized on the premises.

I understand that arrests among Armenians throughout the Caucasus are very numerous. At Tiflis and Kars alone thirty-five families were quite recently placed under arrest without warning, and administratively banished to distant parts of the Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. STEVENS.

No. 12.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 67.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 6, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 54 of the 31st ultim, I have the honour to forward herewith copy of a despatch, from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van reporting further on the recent military disturbances in that town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 3.)
Sir, *Van, January 14, 1904.*

IN continuation of my No. 2 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to report that when the soldiers broke out, they said their only intention was to give the Ferik a lesson and they made straight for his house. The ill-treatment of certain unfortunate civilians was more or less an afterthought, and the assaults on officers which I reported, only took place because these latter interfered or expostulated with the rioters.

I have seen Bimbashi Haji Sefet Bey, a doctor, who is one of the officers whom I reported as being in hospital with a broken head. He told me that he saw some soldiers ducking an Armenian in the stream, which runs down the road, and beating him. He said they would have killed the man if he had not interfered, so he ordered them to desist, whereupon they left their victim and attacked the officer instead.

As I pointed out in my previous Report the question of the rations supplied by contract to the troops lies at the root of the whole matter.

The Vali says (to me) that Mehmed Effendi, the Bimbashi commanding the battalion, is an excellent officer, who only wished his men to be fed in accordance with the scale laid down by Regulations, and who would not lend himself to the contractors' scheme for evading these, and for enriching themselves at the expense of the soldiers; that the Ferik, to please the contractors, allows them to make alterations in the issue of rations, and to depart from the authorized scale for their own convenience, and that the Bimbashis of the other battalions, to please the Ferik, wink at these illegalities, and aid and abet the contractors.

On the other hand, I hear that the Ferik, in his official Report, lays the blame on the Vali. There do not seem to be any grounds for this contention, as it is purely an affair of military administration, in which the Vali could not very well meddle, even if he wished to do so. However, neither the Vali nor the Ferik are likely to refrain from using the affair as a handle against the other, if he can.

It is said that Mehmed Effendi had before made complaints on this subject, and had warned the Ferik that he could not be responsible for what might happen in his battalion if the soldiers continued to be defrauded of their proper rations.

The Ferik seems anxious as to the outcome of the affair. He admits having struck the quarter-master, and says he is ready to take the consequences of having done so, but that he was justified by the latter's misconduct, and that he was an officer whom he had repeatedly cautioned. Mehmed Effendi has been made a prisoner, and practically all the officers of his battalion. Orders were received to send Mehmed Effendi to Erzinjiau for trial, but it is generally thought that he will be tried here. The non-commissioned officers of the battalion have been reduced, and all the men are to be distributed among other battalions, which will supply drafts in their place.

It is rumoured here that orders have been received from Constantinople that the local authorities are to compensate all private individuals who were robbed, or otherwise suffered loss, during the fracas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

No. 13.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 78.) *Constantinople, February 9, 1904.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum inclosing one from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis on the state of affairs in that vilayet, with special reference to the probability of an attack on the Armenian revolutionaries supposed to be in considerable numbers in the district of Sasun.

I spoke to the Grand Vizier on the subject a few days ago and drew attention to the danger in view of the state of unrest among the Armenians on and beyond the Russian frontier of which I had heard a great deal recently, of taking any ill-considered action which might give cause for a recrudescence of Armenian revolutionary activity. I pointed out the objections to the employment of Tewfik Pasha, who was so notorious in connection with the events of 1894–95, in any capacity in which he might have to deal with Armenian outbreaks, and I earnestly warned his Highness against having recourse to military measures, with their not unlikely result of opening the door to the depredations of the Kurdish tribes, unless absolutely compelled to do so.

Ferid Pasha stated in reply that he quite shared my view in regard to any attack on Sasun, which he assured me would not take place unless the action of the revolutionaries rendered it inevitable, and he promised me that if active measures were decided on, every precaution would be taken. The new Vali of Bitlis was about to start for his post and had been instructed to remain some time at Moush to examine the question of the Sasunlis, while orders would be immediately given to Tewfik Pasha to leave Moush and return to Diabekir where he has been continued in the command of the Redifs. I learn that his Highness had used similar language to the Armenian Patriarch a few days previously.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 13.

Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 6. Confidential.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, January 26, 1904.*

WITH reference to the inclosed despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Heathcote, I have the honour to report that I have obtained local confirmation from an unusually trustworthy source of the rumour which has reached Mr. Heathcote, that it has been decided to attack the Fedai at Sasun, as soon as the snow shall have melted, *i.e.*, toward the middle of May. But one thing seems fairly certain and that is, that unless direct and insistent orders are sent from Constantinople, the Marshal Zekki Pasha, will not risk his position, reputation, and life by putting his finger into the hornet's nest at Sasun.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 13.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 3. Confidential.)

Sir, *Bitlis, January 16, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1 of the 9th January, I have the honour report that the Vali of Bitlis died somewhat unexpectedly on the 13th instant Pending the receipt of orders from Constantinople, the Cadi, as the senior official in rank, has assumed the administration of the vilayet.

Now that the question whether Husni Bey is to remain in office or not has been irrevocably decided, I venture once more to call your Excellency's attention to the pressing need of appointing to the vacant post a man possessed of the qualities which are essential to the proper government of the province. Of the nine Valis who have administered this unfortunate vilayet since its creation some twenty-four years ago in 1295 A.H., I cannot find one, judging by the reports of my predecessors and the recollections of old residents, who has been fit for his office.

The control of this district, with its mixed population of turbulent Kurds and oppressed Armenians, undoubtedly offer serious difficulties, but so long as it is intrusted to corrupt fanatics like Tahsin Pasha (1891–1894), passive instruments of the local Aglas like Emner Bey (1894–1900), or even personally honest and well-meaning but timid and indolent officials like Husni Bey (1900–1904), there can be no hope of improvement in its wretched condition.

The Armenians in general would probably be grateful for a very slight improvement, such as could be introduced by a just and resolute Governor without attacking the rights or even the present universal predominance of the Kurds, and many of the latter would welcome a higher standard of justice and security, understanding that they would profit by the prosperity of the country.

With regard to Sasun, the considerations which I had the honour to submit to your Excellency last week have, I think, lost none of their force. The Governor most suitable to the province in general would be the best fitted to cope with this matter also, and the chief bearing of the Sasun question on that of the appointment of a Vali is to show the need of a speedy nomination, so that the new Governor may have time to give the necessary local experience before the spring.

A rumour has reached me, on the authority of a member of the Council of the vilayet, that it has at last been decided to attack the Sasun revolutionaries in the spring, and that the movement will be commanded by the Mushir of the Fourth Army Corps, Zekki Pasha, in person. It is also stated that, probably in view of this decision, the military authorities have been calling for money from the funds of the vilayet.

Whether this rumour be well-founded or not, must be better known to your Excellency than to me, but I venture to think if it be true, the active participation of the Mushir would be advantageous, in view of the fact that the Sasun massacres of 1894 ceased immediately on the Marshal's appearance.

If any such movement is really intended, it is more than ever important that the Vali should be a man of determination, and that he should have had time to learn something of local conditions, to enable him to restrain the excesses of civil officials, which are too apt to accompany military operations in this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 14.

M. Grant Duff to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 13.)
My Lord, *Tehran, January 26, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a despatch from Mr. Wratislaw, His Majesty's Consul-General at Tabriz, reporting the movements of Armenian revolutionaries, and a projected rising in the Van district in the coming spring.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EVELYN GRANT DUFF.

Inclosure in No. 14.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Sir A. Hardinge.

(No. 27. Confidential.)
Sir, *Tabriz, December 28, 1903.*

I HAVE the honour to report that during the last few weeks a considerable number of Armenian revolutionaries have passed from Russia through Persian territory into Turkey. Some 40 or 50 have gone viâ Tabriz, including the leaders, and about 200 have taken other routes. Numbers of rifles, which the revolutionaries or their supporters have bought from Russian arsenals, are also being smuggled over the Turkish frontier through the good offices of a venal Kurdish Chief, and preparations are being made for a rising in the Van district in the spring, on the assumption that the energies of Turkish Government will be absorbed by complications in Europe as soon as the winter is over.

I am informed that the Armenians are endeavouring to persuade the Kurds to rise against the Sultan at the same time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. C. WRATISLAW.

No. 15.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 39.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, February 22, 1904.*

DISTURBANCES in Armenia.

The Porte has received disquieting news of conflicts between Christians and Mussulmans, and of revolutionary activity in the Sassoun district; at Inoghlan some Mussulmans are reported to have been killed.

In the course of the earnest and repeated representations that I have made to the Grand Vizier, I begged that the Kurds might be held in check, and that, if military operations were inevitable, they might be confined to the regular army.

I was assured by his Highness to-day that the regular troops shall be intrusted with the military operations against the insurgents, and that, with a view to prevent bloodshed, they shall be accompanied by three high civil functionaries.

His Highness added that he was fully alive to the danger of excesses. I ascertained at the same time that it was intended to send six or seven battalions to the disturbed districts.

No. 16.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 65.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February 24, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 78 of the 9th instant, relative to the state of unrest among the Armenians of Sassoun, and the probability of an attack being made by the Turkish authorities upon the Armenian revolutionaries in that district.

I entirely approve your action in calling the attention of the Grand Vizier to the matter, and I request that you will continue to impress upon the Turkish Government the danger of any hasty and ill-considered measures against the Armenians.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 17.

Question asked in the House of Commons, February 25, 1904.

Mr. Gibson Bowles,—To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government had any information that negotiations had recently been begun and were now proceeding between the German and the Russian Governments for an arrangement whereby, in return for certain advantages afforded to Russia by Germany, during the hostilities with Japan, Russia would give support to Germany in respect of the construction of the Bagdad Railway and of the general extension of German predominance in Asia Minor.

Answer.

The answer is in the negative.

No. 18.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 29.)

(No. 103.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 19, 1904.*

IN my despatch No. 816 of the 9th December, 1903, I had the honour to report to your Lordship the safe arrival at Medina of Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal.

I recently received a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Hussein, followed shortly after by a telegram from the Begum, from which it appeared that Her Highness was experiencing difficulty in prosecuting her journey from Medina to Mecca, which she desired to do under escort of the Damascus caravan. I accordingly instructed Mr. Lamb to request the Minister for Foreign Affairs to have orders sent to the local authorities to take all necessary measures for the safety and comfort of Her Highness, and Tewfik Pasha telegraphed instructions at once to that effect.

In this connection, and with reference to my despatch No. 81 of the 9th instant, reporting the insecurity of the pilgrim routes and the threat of the tribes to close them altogether, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch from Mr. Devey on the subject. In a recent interview with the Grand Vizier, I called his Highness' attention to recent losses of British-Indian subjects owing to the plundering of caravans, and to the generally unsatisfactory condition of the pilgrim routes this year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Consul Devey to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Jeddah, February 1, 1904.*

I REGRET to report again that brigandage and raiding upon caravan has been lately on the increase in this province during the last six weeks, more especially on the Jeddah–Mecca road; the telegraph wire is frequently cut.

As shown elsewhere, the Bedouins generally are discontented from a variety of causes, and the latest most serious consequence has been the delaying and, now extremely probable, prevention of the departure of the annual caravan for Medina before the Haj, an incident that has not occurred for very many years.

About 10,000 pilgrims were hoping to visit Medina, and from many of these the sum of 45 silver mejidis has been collected for camel hire per head. As it is quite impossible to think of refunding the money paid in advance by the pilgrims, arrangements should be at once undertaken to insure their being provided with camel transport as soon as possible after the Haj. Unless some arrangement of the kind be at once carried out, a most grave scandal (one is tempted to say swindle) will have taken place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

No. 19.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received February 29.)

(No. 118.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 23, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 78 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report that, on the 13th and 14th instant, I received from Mr. Heathcote, Vice-Consul at Bitlis, telegraphic reports as to the condition of tension and anxiety reported to exist in the neighbourhood of Moush.

The immediate cause appears to have been an affray between revolutionaries and tax-collectors, but a general belief was prevalent that the Khurds were ready for excesses, and that orders from Constantinople existed to which they could appeal in justification. Mr. Heathcote added that great good would result from any indication that the central Government really desired tranquillity.

I accordingly commissioned Mr. Lamb, First Dragoman of the Embassy, to communicate the sense of Mr. Heathcote's Report to the Grand Vizier, and to add a warning as to the dangers attendant on any fresh excesses by the Khurds or Mussulmans of Armenia. His Highness replied that bands of revolutionaries, variously estimated at a few hundred to a thousand, were now in the Sassoun Mountains, whence they would descend in the spring to make disturbances in the plain. No decision had been come to as to the measures to be taken against them, pending the report of the new Vali of Bitlis, who was then leaving for his post with strict orders to prevent excesses and to tranquillize the population. On the following day, Mr. Lamb renewed his representations to the Sultan's First Secretary, who laid them before His Majesty. The Sultan sent me a message, in reply, to the effect that he had taken note of the communication, that the new Vali had received categorical instructions in the matter, and that fresh instructions should be telegraphed to the Acting Vali for his guidance, pending the former's arrival.

The Grand Vizier has since informed me that some revolutionaries, under the notorious leader Andronik, had come down from Sassoun and taken forcible possession of a Mussulman village. A telegram just received from Mr. Heathcote states that the latest news from Moush shows that anxiety there is on the increase.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 20.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 91.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March 4, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 118 of the 23rd ultimo, relative to the condition of tension and anxiety reported to exist in the neighbourhood of Mush.

I approve the representations which you have made in the matter to the Ottoman Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 21.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 7.)

(No. 141.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 1, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 118 of the 23rd ultimo, respecting the dangers of disturbances in the Sassoun district, and to my telegram No. 39 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to report that, according to official information communicated by the Grand Vizier, the Armenian revolutionaries, to the number of several hundreds under the leadership of Andranik, have for some time past been endeavouring to provoke the Mussulman population by attacking their villages on the outskirts of Sassoun, driving out the inhabitants and appropriating their arms. A telegram received by the Porte on the 20th February from the Mutessarif of Guendj announced that a band of 14 Armenians from Talori entered the village of Ineghian in the Kulp Caza, killed and mutilated 3 Moslems, carried off two women, and committed many other acts of violence. The Chief Andranik is supposed to have established his head-quarters in the village of Dapik, the centre of a nahié of which the Turkish Mudir and officer of gendarmerie had fled to Moush. The insurgents display a blue flag with the emblem of an eagle.

In consequence of this intelligence, and the disquieting nature of recent telegrams from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, I caused representations to be made to the Grand Vizier in regard to the political dangers which would arise from any renewal of excesses in Armenian districts, and suggested certain precautionary measures. His Highness stated most positively that he was keenly alive to the seriousness of the situation, and that every possible precaution would be taken to prevent the occurrence of any outrages. The Military Commanders had received the strictest instructions not to attack the revolutionaries without previously reporting the circumstances to head-quarters and obtaining specific authorization. They had further been instructed under no circumstances to allow Kurds or Hamidieh cavalry to take part in any operations which might become necessary, and in order that a sufficient force might be available to keep the Kurds in check and to maintain the general tranquillity six or seven battalions from the Dersim district had been ordered to proceed towards Moush to reinforce the six battalions already quartered in that neighbourhood.

Three high civil judicial functionaries had received orders to accompany the troops on all occasions, and it would be their duty to endeavour to persuade the insurgents to come to terms with the Government before actual recourse to force was made, and *procès-verbaux* would be drawn up to show that this procedure had been properly carried out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 22.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 95.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 9, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 103 of the 19th ultimo, relative to the insecurity of the pilgrim routes to Mecca. I approve the action which you have taken with a view to ensuring the safety and comfort of His Highness the Begum of Bhopal, and the representations which you have made to the Grand Vizier on the subject of the recent losses of British Indian subjects owing to the plundering of caravans.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 23.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 98.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 10, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 141 of the 1st instant, reporting the representations which you made to the Grand Vizier on the subject of the danger of disturbance in the Sassoun district. I approve the language which you held to his Highness.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 24.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 155.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 8, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 141 of the 1st March, respecting the dangers of disturbances in the neighbourhood of Moush, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of despatches from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis on the subject.

A telegram received from Mr. Heathcote on the 2nd instant states that the Acting Vali refuses to give any information about the incident which is reported to have taken place in the district of Kulp, and insists that nothing serious has occurred. The local authorities declare that every precaution is being taken, and Mr. Heathcote learns that very stringent orders had just been received to avoid excesses or massacres following a breach of tranquillity. A considerable amount of movement is, however, reported in the military centres from which operations against the Armenian revolutionaries would be conducted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 24.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 5.)

Sir, *Bitlis, February* 13, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 4 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that reports reach me from various sources pointing to the existence of a state of unusual apprehension at Moush, caused principally by an incident which occurred in a neighbouring village, when the officials engaged in collecting taxes were attacked, apparently by revolutionaries. This seems to have been followed by threats of reprisals in the town. On hearing these rumours, I at once called on the Acting Vali, the Mutessarif of Moush, who assured me that the affair in the plain had not been serious; that the Headman of the village had been killed, but only one

gendarme wounded, and he but slightly; that the early accounts had been exaggerated, and that he himself had no fear of the incident being followed by any troubles at Moush, which was perfectly quiet, adding that the town was sufficiently garrisoned to prevent the possibility of any disturbance. As the Governor's telegraphic information is necessarily much more recent than the reports that had reached me, I hope his account of the matter may prove correct, but I am disposed to think that his attitude, towards me at all events, with regard to any individual incident or question, is unduly optimistic, though he admits, what no one ventures to deny, that the general state of the vilayet is very bad.

I am assured by a person unusually well qualified to obtain information, whom I have hitherto had no cause to regard as an alarmist, and who seems to be a man of intelligence and considerable experience, that throughout the province the Kurds are merely waiting for a suitable pretext to begin a general attack on the Armenians, and the latter believed that the local authorities are in possession of instructions for certain contingencies which, if published and put in force, would be regarded as a licence to repeat the proceedings of 1895. This information is confirmed from other sources also.

Neither side believes that the Central Government sincerely cares for peace and order in these parts, and in view of the history of recent years the doubt is only natural. If, however, the Constantinople authorities really do desire that the Bitlis Vilayet should remain quiet, and should not become the scene of a general massacre, they could do much to secure their object by making their wishes clear to the local administration and to the Kurdish leaders.

Past experience shows that the Kurds will not undertake any general "repression" of the Armenians unless they believe such action to be agreeable to the Sultan, though, doubtless, they are by nature predisposed to adopt this belief on slight evidence.

If the Government fail to convince the Moslems, official and tribal, of their wish for tranquillity, and to convince them by proofs more cogent than the mere repetition of formal standing orders, it is to be feared that the first step taken in Sasun, whether it comes from the revolutionaries or from the troops, will be received as the signal for a general movement against the Armenians throughout the vilayet, and that the Kurds, besides the satisfaction of their savage instincts, will be animated by the belief that they are carrying out the wishes of their Sovereign. If, however, the proper steps are taken in advance, the Government ought to be able, without raising the Armenian question as a whole, to suppress the movement in Sasun before it becomes too dangerous.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 24.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 8.)

Sir, *Bitlis, February* 20, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Alban Young's despatch of the 26th January, relative to the appointment of Ferid Bey, member of the Council of State, as Vali of Bitlis. His Excellency having left Constantinople on the 16th instant may be expected here early in March. It is much to be hoped that his conduct as Governor-General may justify the more favourable estimate of his character and abilities referred to by Mr. Young, for, as your Excellency knows, the present condition of this province is such as to call for both capacity and energy, as well as for that which Ferid Bey no doubt possesses—influence at the Palace to secure the execution of any policy he may recommend. This last qualification would seem to have been lacking to the late Husni Bey, so that in this respect, at least, the change may be an improvement.

Rashad Pasha, who had been acting as Vali since the 21st January, left on the 18th instant to resume his duties as Mutessarif of Moush, and his place here has been taken by Musa Kiazim Pasha, Mutessarif of Sairt, who arrived last night.

This change was presumably caused by the state of affairs at Moush, where the presence of the responsible Governor would seem to be most desirable. The uneasiness in the town still continues, and from the accounts of Armenians recently come to Bitlis, the affair in the village of Hunuk, reported in my despatch No. 5 of the 13th February, seems to have been more serious than Rashad Pasha would admit. At any rate, I am assured that all the able-bodied inhabitants of the village, which lies in the plain, one or

two hours north-east of Moush, fled to the mountains and joined the revolutionaries to escape from the brutality of the gendarmes, who are said to have avenged on the women and children the attack that had been made on them.

When all possible allowance is made for exaggeration it would still appear that the authorities are taking the most effective measures to increase the number of their active opponents. It is understood that in most of the villages there are one or two revolutionaries who will doubtless gain recruits by their stories of women outraged and small children murdered at Hunan.

It is so evidently the interest of the Government to localize the Sasun affair as far as possible, that I trust Ferid Bey may have been instructed to prevent all excesses on the part of his subordinates, especially on the Moush plain and other districts near Sasun. The ordinary Armenian peasant is doubtless a somewhat difficult subject for taxation, especially in his present impoverished state, but, like all other peasants, he does not leave his fields and his family and take to the mountains except as a measure of despair, and the mere fact that open villages like Hunan can offer no resistance to the troops should in itself suffice to restrain the authorities from such excesses as will drive the inhabitants to the mountain fastnesses. The first counsel of simple self-interest would thus seem to be the avoidance of excessive severity—at least, in the open districts.

There is one other direction in which I venture to think action could be taken. After the complete impunity of the promoters of the massacres in 1895, the Kurds naturally think that the Government is more or less indifferent to their proceedings, and that it will not object to their repressing in the same manner any disturbance that may arise out of the present position in Sasun. Now the Hamidié organization, if it has no other merits, is at least a means by which the Government can make its real wishes known to the tribal Chiefs, and if they could be brought to understand that the Sultan will not tolerate their taking the law into their own hands an important step would have been taken towards the localization of any conflict that may arise this year.

The release of Riza Agha just at this moment, reported in my despatch No. 7 of the 13th February, points to the improbability of any such use being made of the Hamedié system; but unless it is made known that the Sultan does not wish the Armenian question to be added to that of Macedonia, there will be reason to fear serious disorder whenever any measures are taken against Sasun.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 25.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 166.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 12, 1904.*

THE general uneasiness reported by His Majesty's Consuls at Erzeroum and Bitlis to exist in the district of Sassun induced me to speak to the Sultan on the subject yesterday. I explained to His Majesty how great was the anxiety caused by the arrangements now being made for the concentration of a large military force at Moush, with the object of proceeding against the revolutionary bands which had crossed the frontier, and were endeavouring to stir up the people to insurrection. The unfortunate inhabitants, harassed as they were on one side by these bands and on the other by the exactions of the Kurds, hardly knew how to save themselves, and would evidently in their distress be driven to revolt unless the Government interfered energetically, and gave them satisfactory guarantees of protection. I believed the symptoms of fear and unrest resembled very closely those which were visible previous to the sad events of 1894 and 1895. But, however this might be, the situation seemed to me so serious that I thought it my duty to direct His Majesty's attention to it, as I was sure he was alive to the disastrous effect which would be produced by any outrages and excesses such as seemed hardly avoidable were the Hamidieh troops once in movement. His Grand Vizier had already informed me of the precautions taken to prevent the effusion of blood. I submitted, however, to His Majesty the expediency of going a step further, and of endeavouring to negotiate peacefully with the chief men of the Sassun and Moush districts, and of offering a general amnesty, provided they quietly agreed to allow the revolutionary leaders, such as Andronik and his followers, to be expelled from the country.

No. 25*.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 23.)

(No. 180. Cypher despatch.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 17, 1904.*

DISTURBANCES in Armenia.

Referring to my despatches No. 166 of the 10th, and No. 167 of the 10th instant, suggesting Consular mediation between the Ottoman Government and the revolutionaries in the Sassun district, in the event of the Patriarch's intervention failing, should your Lordship approve of the idea, I think it would be advisable that the French Embassy or Government should be consulted in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

The Sultan entered into a desultory history of the ingratitude and infidelity of the Armenians to the Imperial House of Osman, and cited instances of Armenians who had been employed in positions of the utmost confidence by his father and himself. Eventually he returned to the idea I had thrown out, and remarked that it seemed to him deserving of consideration, and that it had already crossed his mind. He was not, however, more explicit, but I know that he discussed the matter with the Grand Vizier this morning.

I had thought of suggesting that His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis might be used as an intermediary, but, as it would involve a serious responsibility in case the Sultan's assurances were not carried out, I did not like to propose it before first submitting the idea to your Lordship, and knowing to what extent the Russian Government would be inclined to co-operate with us in case of its acceptance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 26.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 176.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 16, 1904.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 166 of the 12th instant, informing your Lordship of the suggestion I made to the Sultan at my audience on the 11th instant respecting the revolutionary movement in the Sassun and Moush districts of Armenia, I have the honour to report that the Armenian Patriarch was summoned to the Palace next day, when he was told by the Sultan's First Secretary that there were in Moush and Sassun some 400 revolutionaries, only 50 of whom were believed to have come from Persia or the Caucasus, while the rest were natives of the country. The Sultan was anxious that the state of unrest resulting from the presence of these persons should be put an end to without unnecessary bloodshed, and, if possible, without recourse to military action. His Majesty consequently invited the Patriarch to instruct his subordinates at Moush to enter into negotiations with the revolutionaries, with a view to persuading them to disperse and return to their homes, on the understanding that they should be amnestied, and secured from further molestation.

The Patriarch suggested that a military officer should accompany his emissaries in their attempts to negotiate, in order to show that the Mission was authorized by the Imperial Government, but the suggestion was set aside.

I understand that the Patriarch is now sending instructions to the ecclesiastical authorities in Moush and its neighbourhood in the sense of the above invitation.

In view of the possibility of the miscarriage of these negotiations, I should be glad to be put in possession of your Lordship's views with regard to the suggestion brought forward in my despatch above referred to that we should, in co-operation with the Russian Government, offer the services of our officials as intermediaries between the revolutionaries and the Ottoman Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 27.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir C. Scott.

(No. 148A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March 23, 1904.*

I TOLD the Russian Ambassador to-day that we had received from Sir Nicholas O'Conor despatches pointing to a very serious condition of things in the Armenian population of the districts of Susun and Moush. The Sultan had, it appeared, arranged with the Armenian Patriarch that he should endeavour to bring about an arrangement for pacifying these districts, based upon the withdrawal of the revolutionaries who had come in from Persia and the Caucasus, with the promise of an amnesty to the other persons implicated. In the event of the Patriarch's efforts proving unsuccessful, it was suggested that an attempt should be made by the Russian

and British Vice-Consuls to bring about an amicable arrangement. It was, I said, in our opinion, clearly desirable that if our Consul took action in the matter he should do so in co-operation with his Russian colleague. His Excellency said that he should have much pleasure in repeating my proposal to the Russian Government, and he asked me to send him a Memorandum of the facts, which I subsequently did.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 28.

Memorandum communicated to Count Benckendorff, March 26, 1904.

DURING the month of February last reports were received from His Majesty's Consular officers at Erzeroum and Bitlis with regard to the serious state of unrest prevailing among the Armenians in the Moush and Sassun districts, and the probability of an attack being made by the Turkish authorities upon the Armenian revolutionaries supposed to be in considerable numbers in the district of Sassun.

His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople drew the attention of the Turkish Government to the danger of any ill-considered action on their part which might cause a recrudescence of Armenian revolutionary activity.

On the 11th instant His Majesty's Ambassador had an opportunity of speaking to the Sultan on this subject. He explained to His Majesty how great was the anxiety caused by the arrangements then being made for the concentration of a large military force at Moush, with the object of proceeding against the revolutionary bands which had crossed the frontier. He submitted to His Majesty the expediency of endeavouring to negotiate peaceably with the chief men of the Sassun and Moush districts and of offering a general amnesty, provided they quietly agreed to allow the revolutionary leaders to be expelled from the country.

The Sultan remarked that this idea seemed to him deserving of consideration, and that it had already crossed his mind.

Sir N. O'Conor understands that the Armenian Patriarch was shortly afterwards summoned to the Palace, and was informed by the Sultan's First Secretary that there were in Moush and Sassun some 400 revolutionaries, only fifty of whom were believed to have come from Persia or the Caucasus, while the rest were natives of the country; that the Sultan was anxious that the state of unrest resulting from the presence of these persons should be put an end to without unnecessary bloodshed, and, if possible, without recourse to military action. His Majesty consequently invited the Patriarch to instruct his subordinates at Moush to enter into negotiations with the revolutionaries, with a view to persuading them to disperse and return to their homes, on the understanding that they should be amnestied and secured from further molestation.

The Patriarch suggested that a military officer should accompany his emissaries in their attempts to negotiate, in order to show that the mission was authorized by the Imperial Government, but this suggestion was set aside.

It is understood that the Patriarch is now sending instructions to the ecclesiastical authorities in Moush and its neighbourhood in the sense of the above invitation.

In the event of the miscarriage of these negotiations, Sir N. O'Conor has suggested that His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government might offer the services of their Consular officials on the spot as intermediaries, with a view to bring about an amicable arrangement between the Armenians and the Turkish Government.

Foreign Office, March 26, 1904.

No. 29.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received March 28.)

(No. 195.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 22, 1904.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence respecting the danger of the Armenian question again becoming acute, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from the Acting British Consul at Erzeroum, reporting on the general position of affairs in that vilayet.

The Grand Vizier some days ago communicated to me a series of reassuring telegrams which he had received from the Valis of the Armenian provinces in reply to instructions forwarded to them as the result of my representations.

The Vali of Diarbekir telegraphs that he guarantees the maintenance of order in his district, but that his Highness' instructions will, nevertheless, be put into effect. The Vali of Van admitted that about a month ago some rumours of possible disturbance were in circulation, but that all was now quiet. Nazim Bey reported from Erzeroum that for a year past the Revolutionary Committees abroad had been striving to extend their propaganda in that vilayet, and were endeavouring by promises of supplying arms and other assistance to excite the Armenians to action, which would in turn provoke the Mussulman population to reprisals. Nevertheless, when last summer large revolutionary bands had crossed the Russian frontier and penetrated to a considerable distance into the Vilayet of Erzeroum, the measures taken had proved so efficient that the invaders had been entirely dispersed and driven back without any evil consequences falling on the peaceable inhabitants, including even those of the villages which had harboured the revolutionaries. Stringent measures had been taken to prevent any more such bands from crossing the frontier; the province was tranquil, and his Excellency was confident that no serious disturbances were to be feared.

The Vali of Sivas also telegraphed that his province was undisturbed. It was true that about a month ago alarmist rumours had been circulated at Tokat, but his inquiries had satisfied him that they were invented by the Armenians themselves, who were imposing upon certain Consuls and missionaries. Nevertheless, orders had been issued in accordance with the Grand Vizier's instructions, and, if any disorders should occur, measures would be taken to deal promptly with them, without allowing the Hamidieh Kurds to take any part therein.

The Embassy was also informed that reports from Angora, Kharpout, and Bitlis were awaited, and would in due course be communicated.

I have since had an opportunity of again calling the Grand Vizier's attention to the gravity of the situation in the Moush and Sassoun districts, but his Highness insisted that the reports of anxiety and unrest amongst the Armenian and Turkish population were exaggerated, and that in any case the stringent orders that had been sent to the local authorities would not fail to have a pacifying and beneficial effect.

My Russian and French colleagues are, however, as anxious as I am on the subject, and I feel sure that both of them will advise their Governments to agree to sending their Consuls on a mediatory mission to the insurgents, should the efforts of the Patriarch, as reported in my despatch No. 176 of the 16th instant, not prove successful.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Acting Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 13.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, March 12, 1904.*

WITH reference to the first part of my immediately preceding despatch of the 5th instant, I regret being obliged to report that the news of the imprisonment here of Riza Bey is false. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished, but not one likely to be obtained without very stringent orders from Constantinople. The fact that the Mushir received 500*l.* from Riza Bey is too notorious to be dissimulated.

In a conversation which I had with the Vali this afternoon, I thought it my duty to summarize in very plain terms what I have repeated *ad nauseam* to his Excellency for the last three months—that, in my opinion, the state of affairs in this vilayet is going from worse to worst; that the administration of the province is very rotten; that in no branch of it can justice be obtained or work be done without heavy bribes; that the corruption in the police and gendarmerie has reached a point indeed of before; that the Moslems are, if anything, more indignant at and impatient of this state of things than the Christians; that the Government, by its vexatious and futile arrests, and the Kurds by their brutality, are rapidly increasing the number of the revolutionaries; and, finally, that there is a great and ever-growing expectation among all but the most enlightened classes, and especially among the soldiers and the police and gendarmes, that orders will shortly come from the Padishah for the extermination of the Armenians.

His Excellency did not deny these statements with the energy I had expected, though he thought them exaggerated, especially that which described evil expectations to the Moslem population. I would not weary your Excellency with these details were it not that the Vali is rapidly becoming a mere cypher, that by his weakness and his good nature he is the cause of this collapse of the administration, and that if anything is to save the province from trouble it must come from Constantinople.

The populations are expecting orders from the Palace, and I would venture to suggest that if the latter is sincere in its wish that the Armenians should not be massacred this spring here or elsewhere, it should say so clearly to the populations through the medium of the local official press in one of those Proclamations, of which we had so many last year in Macedonia, to the Vali in categorical orders for the maintenance of the peace for the discountenancing of Moslem threats against Christians, for the cleansing of the police and gendarmerie (*e.g.*, the dismissal of both Chiefs), and in general for keeping a firmer and stronger grip on the administration, civil and judicial, of this province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 30.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir C. Scott.

(No. 156.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March 30, 1904.*

I TOLD the Russian Ambassador to-day, with reference to my conversation recorded in my despatch No. 148 A of the 29rd instant, that it had been suggested to me that it might be desirable that the French Consul should be invited to co-operate with the Russian and British Consuls in endeavouring to effect a reconciliation between the opposing parties at Sassun and Mush. His Excellency said that he saw no objection, and would telegraph my suggestion to the Russian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 31.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 4.)

(No. 202.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 28, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 195 of the 22nd instant, and to previous correspondence respecting Armenian unrest, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, respecting the prevailing uneasiness in that province, and confirming the information already reported to your Lordship that stringent orders had been sent to the local authorities to prevent disturbances. I indulge the hope that, in consequence of the representations I have made to the Porte, no doubt will be left in the minds of the local officials that it is the desire and the will of the Central Government to prevent outrages.

The general publication of orders of this description is the best guarantee for the moment against the recurrence of anything like the incidents of 1894–1895.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 30°.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 127 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March 31, 1904.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 180 of the 19th instant and to my despatch to Sir C. Scott No. 156 of the 30th instant, I spoke to the French Ambassador on the subject of the serious condition of affairs in the Armenian districts of Sassun and Moush.

M. Cambon informed me to-day that M. Delcassé's views were entirely favourable to the suggestion that the Consuls of France, Russia, and Great Britain should be authorized to concert together with a view to bring about an arrangement for pacifying the disturbed districts.

His Excellency added that the French Government would send the necessary instructions to their Consuls in Armenia as soon as they learnt that the British Consuls had received similar instructions from His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

Inclosure in No. 31.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 9.)

Bitlis, March 5, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, during the Kourban Bairam (26th–28th February), I learnt from two distinct sources, both Mussulman, of the existence of a plan to attack the Armenians of this town after the feast, on the ground apparently that the position of the Sasun revolutionaries was becoming a danger to the Moslems. I have very little doubt that the scheme existed, though it appears to have been discountenanced from the first by the more influential Kurds, some holding that the moment was unsuitable, and others that any such action should be avoided altogether.

The Acting Vali, in answer to my strong representations, gave me the most positive assurances that he would secure the complete maintenance of order, though he professed to disbelieve in the existence of any desire to create disturbances, and I am glad to say that, whether in consequence of any action taken by Musa Kiazim Pasha or of the attitude of the Kurdish Chiefs, the last five days have passed quietly.

The Armenians, who were very anxious, and avoided the bazaars as much as possible early in the week, are now regaining confidence, and resuming the regular conduct of their business, but the impression prevails that a serious crisis has been passed, and that at one time the danger of an outbreak was imminent.

The Governor, who only arrived at Sairt a few months ago from Nejd, has never been in these parts before; he has consequently but little local experience, and was perhaps sincere in his disbelief in the danger which I indicated to him.

On the night of the 1st instant a telegram was received from Constantinople, containing the most stringent orders to take every precaution against disturbance, and I think it probable that, apart from the possible consequences of hostilities in Sasun, no trouble need arise here if the Kurdish Chiefs and local authorities understand that the Central Government is really determined to maintain order.

I was unable to obtain any information from the Governor as to the state of Kulp. He seemed to admit, though very reluctantly, that order had been in some way threatened, but insisted that nothing serious had happened, and that he was in no apprehension of trouble there. Any steps that the military authorities might take he professed to regard as mere measures of precaution.

With respect to the condition of Moush, too, he continues to assert that all is well, but I cannot say whether these optimistic statements are genuine, or whether they are merely intended to deceive me until I am able to bring evidence to disprove them.

The accounts that reach me from Armenian sources are disquieting. Fear is general, and the bazaars are practically deserted; but I understand that nothing of importance has actually occurred as yet.

I am informed that the Government has refused permission to certain merchants to return to their homes in Bitlis with their goods, and that this step has been taken to prevent alarm being caused by the idea that they had fled from Moush. Such interference would, however, seem more likely to excite than to allay fear.

It is also said that cannon have been mounted in a position commanding part of the town. This is denied by the Governor, and would seem improbable but for what happened last summer, when the same step was taken. The last Vali then denied the truth of the report, but when I visited Moush, after the guns had been removed, the commandant maintained that they had been taken out for purposes of drill. Shortly before his death, and after his quarrel with Salih Pasha, Husni Bey told me that it had been a great mistake to bring out the cannon, and had caused needless alarm, and I did not gather that he regarded the measure as a mere matter of drill. If the story be true this time, the excuse of drill will hardly serve in the month of February.

It appears that the town of Moush is well patrolled, and that, even by the admission of those who assert that the Armenian quarter is practically blockaded, the soldiers have so far been behaving well.

Salih Pasha has quite recently been promoted General of Division, and, as I understand, confirmed in the command that he has hitherto held as Acting Ferik.

Ferid Bey, the new Vali, left Aleppo on the 1st instant, and may be expected here in about a fortnight.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 32.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 4.)

(No. 210. Confidential.)
Constantinople, March 28, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a Confidential Memorandum by Mr. Lamb, giving the substance of a recent Report by the Ottoman Consul at Tiflis on the condition of affairs in the Caucasus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 32.

Memorandum by Mr. Lamb.

I HAVE had an opportunity of perusing a Report recently received here from the Ottoman Consul in Tiflis, of which I venture to submit a summary, not on account of the intrinsic value of the writer's ideas, which are almost ridiculously crude, but because I gather that it is characteristic of a current of opinion in official circles, which may not be without its influence in shaping Turkish policy.

The tone of the Reports received from Ottoman Representatives abroad is generally in accordance with what the writers believe to be desired at home. Those received from Russia since the commencement of hostilities in the Far East are almost unanimous in depicting the state of affairs in that country in dismal colours, and many Turks hope, and are willing to believe, that the Russian Empire is in danger of breaking up.

(Signed) HARRY H. LAMB.

March 25, 1904.

Inclosure 2 in No. 32.

Summary of a Report from Tiflis, dated March 7, 1904.

AFTER alluding to the anti-Russian demonstrations organized by the Georgian and Armenian populations of Tiflis, Baku, and Kutais on the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war, the Report goes on to show that the two principal Christian elements in the Caucasus are working against the Russian administration. The dissatisfaction which had been produced among the Armenians by their gradual exclusion from the public service and the restrictions imposed upon the teaching of their language, has recently been intensified by the measures taken for transferring the control of their Church property to the State. As for the Georgians, who have had to surrender every trace of their national rights and privileges, they have been occupied ever since 1901, which was the centenary of the cession of their country to Russia, in forming committees, both in the Caucasus and in Europe, for the purpose of reviving the nationalist sentiment and achieving their independence.

With a view to this end two newspapers, in French and Georgian, have been started in Paris, and these organs, as well as other insurrectionary pamphlets and manifestoes, are introduced into the Caucasus by way of Persia and circulated amongst the people.

The writer concludes that both the Armenians of the Caucasus, who hold all the wealth, the commerce, and the industry of the country in their hands, and the Georgian Chiefs and Nobles, who consider themselves its rightful rulers, are amenable to Turkish influence, and he professes to have received personal assurances from leaders of opinion belonging to both nationalities that, if they were to be assured of enjoying autonomy under the suzerainty of the Sultan, they would risk everything to co-operate with Ottoman troops, and he advocates, in the event of war with Russia, the landing of a force on the Abkhasian coast which might co-operate with the Trebizonde Division in a march on Tiflis.

Incidentally the writer mentions that he has heard of a proposal to raise two fresh regiments of cavalry from among the Mussulman population of Vladikavkaz, and also that

the two army corps in the Caucasus are on the point of being equipped upon a war footing. These measures have given rise to the following rumours:—

1. That a part of these troops (which he estimates at between 300,000 and 400,000 men) are to be sent to Manchuria.

2. That they are to be sent to Merv or the Pamirs to check any inclination on the part of England to come to the aid of Japan.

3. That they will be used to make a demonstration on the Asiatic frontier of Turkey, with a view to assisting Bulgaria in its contest with the Ottoman Empire.

No. 33.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 63.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 5, 1904.*

MY despatch No. 180 of the 17th March: Mediation in Armenia.

I learn that the mediation of the Armenian Bishops is rejected by the revolutionaries on the ground that the guarantee for the fulfilment of the Sultan's promises of amnesty is insufficient. If, however, the promises are made through the foreign Consuls, they profess to be ready to lay down their arms, and I hear a report that overtures have been made by them to the Russian Consul at Erzeroum in this sense.

With reference to my despatch No. 166 of the 12th March, I should be grateful if your Lordship would furnish me with instructions in regard to the proposal contained therein.

No. 34.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 62.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April 6, 1904.*

ARMENIA: Your telegram No. 63 of yesterday.

I have consulted the French and Russian Ambassadors on the proposal contained in your despatch No. 166 of the 12th March.

The French Government are ready to agree, and will send the necessary instructions to their Consuls on learning that His Majesty's Government have done likewise.

Count Benckendorff has referred to St. Petersburgh for instructions.

Your French and Russian colleagues may therefore now be consulted on the subject.

No. 35.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 11.)

(No. 234.)
Constantinople, April 4, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 202 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis on the subject of the relations between the Kurds and the Nestorians in the north of the Mosul district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 10.) *Bitlis, March* 19, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have lately seen an American missionary who has returned from a journey among the Nestorians of the Lower Bohtan and the Amadia district of the Mosul Vilayet.

Although this country is not in my Vice-Consular district, it is so very rarely visited by foreigners that I venture to submit to your Excellency a point noticed by this gentleman which appears to be of some importance. My informant had been in those parts seven years ago, shortly after the Armenian massacres, and found that at that time the Nestorians had generally been protected by the authorities and their Kurdish neighbours, who felt that the Government, though incensed with the Armenians, had no grievance against the Nestorians.

On his next visit, from which he has just returned, he considered that the situation was very different, and he is of opinion that in case of any future movement against the Armenians all Christians will be involved. He also found signs of a belief on both sides that the present state of tranquillity would not last long.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 36.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 11.)

(No. 237.) *Constantinople, April* 5, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a despatch from the Military Attaché to His Majesty's Embassy reporting the formation of a 20th Division of Nizam infantry at Mush.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 36.

Lieutenant-Colonel Maunsell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 27.) *Constantinople, April* 4, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that it has been decided to form an additional Nizam division in the IVth (Erzingan) Ordu, to be designated the 20th.

Already in this corps there are three divisions of Nizam infantry, or one more than the usual complement, their head-quarters being at Erzeroum (7th Division), Van (8th Division), and Kharput (19th Division).

The new division is to have its head-quarters at Mush, and the seventeen battalions constituting it will be drawn from the following units:—

The eight battalions of the 16th Brigade at Mush will pass into the new division, five battalions will be drawn from the 19th (Kharput) Division, now engaged in watching the Dersim, two battalions from the 7th (Erzeroum) Division, one battalion the 1st of the 30th Regiment, which has lately been guilty of such mutinous conduct at Van, will be sent to Mush to form the new division.

A rifle battalion (Nishanji) will be raised from the above, and this will complete it.

To fill up the places of those removed, sixteen new battalions will have to be raised from the various recruiting districts of the regiments mentioned above.

Those of the 16th Brigade are not drawn from the country round Mush, but from the Kurdistan and Tokat districts of the Sivas Vilayet, which have an Osmanli population.

Those from the Kharput Division are recruited from Malatia and the Lazistan coast of the Black Sea.

The 2nd battalion of the 28th Regiment will be sent from Mehsgird to replace the battalion drawn from Van.

It will be seen, therefore, that the men will be drawn not from the local Kurds but rather from the Osmanli and Laz populations, which constitute a far better fighting material.

Salih Pasha, recently promoted to the rank of Ferik, will command the new division, which is intended to be complete in May.

The men can easily be found, but the officers, owing to the great drain for the Macedonian corps, will be more difficult to find.

The formation of this additional division in the corps nearest the Russian frontier has been under consideration for the last few years, but apparently the Turks have taken advantage now of the Russians being occupied elsewhere to put the project into execution.

There is much wild talk in military circles that now is the moment for the Turks to win back the lost provinces of Kars and Ardahan, taking advantage of Armenian and Georgian discontent against Russian rule in the Trans-Caucasus.

Should the Russians sustain a serious land defeat at the hands of the Japanese in the Far East, it may be that these dreams would take a more solid shape.

No decision has yet been arrived at as regards calling out all the Hamidie regiments for training.

The military authorities scarcely wish to create further difficulties by arming all these doubtful levies at once, an experiment which they have never yet tried.

At the same time all these tribesmen have arms of their own, either Martinis or Berdans; and in the event of troubles in Sassun, the more turbulent Chiefs of the Hassananli and other tribes could collect at Mush, each with their personal following, and would cling to the skirts of the advancing columns of regular troops, and pillage and loot to their hearts' content.

This is more to be feared than a regular mobilization of all the regiments, who would then be under control of a certain number of Turkish regular officers, one or two of whom are with each regiment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL, *Lieutenant-Colonel, Military Attaché.*

No. 37.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 11.)

(No. 241.) *Constantinople, April* 5, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch, which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, giving the first detailed and precise information which I have yet received respecting the progress of the Konieh–Eregli section of the Bagdad Railway and its intended branch to the Mediterranean.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Vice-Consul Townshend to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 13.) *Adana, March* 23, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that I started on the 8th instant and returned last evening from the journey sanctioned by your Excellency to Eregli and Kuruman.

On arrival in the latter town I found I could get permission to travel from the rail-head of the Bagdad Railway to Konia, and, therefore, as His Majesty's War Office had asked me for a Military Report of Konia and the line, I judged it best to avail myself of the opportunity. The Director of the Railway showed me every courtesy.

Mr. Humpson, Vice-Consul at Konia, told me that he had reported my arrival there to you.

I called upon the leading officials of the town through which I passed, and was

everywhere received by them with the greatest civility. My movements were invariably telegraphed ahead of me, and found that I was expected in each town. The route I followed was from Tarsus to Eregli, Karaman, and Konia, and the return journey from Konia to Karaman, Mut, Selefke, and Mersina.

I ascertained the following facts with reference to the Railway line eastwards from Konia:—

The present work is to be carried out only to Bulgurlu village, just beyond Eregli, and 200 kilom. from Konia. It is expected that this point will be reached by the end of September.

After that it is hoped that next spring a careful survey will be made with a view of continuing the line from Bulgurlu to Adana, and to some point on the coast between Ayas and Alexandretta, possibly at Ayas Bay itself, or even at Mersina, by means of the present Adana–Mersina Railway. In the latter case the new Railway Company would construct a port at Mersina, and would buy up the local Railway. The line taken from Bulgurlu would probably follow the valley of the Chakit Su, passing by Ak Kupru, in which case I understand it will be necessary to construct over fifty tunnels, and the expense will be very heavy. It is obvious, however, that the line will not cease at Bulgurlu, which is without any importance. It is a significant fact that the officials, while denying any knowledge of the continuation of the line, speak of it as the "Bagdad line," and also that the Railway Company is building a hotel with some sixty bedrooms at Konia.

The ballast trains are now running to a point about 53 kilom. from Konia, and the rails are not laid beyond that point; but the work is being carried on the whole way to Eregli. Up to the present no engineering difficulty is met with, and without rails or stations there is an expenditure of about 300*l.* per kilom. The rails are of the most modern type (made by Messrs. Krupp), and the sleepers all of iron, the rails being bolted to them from underneath to increase the difficulty of destroying the line.

The bridges are being built of stone, not iron. The gauge is 1¼ metres. The Railway Company has a map of the line, road, and of the surrounding country, from Konia to Bulgurlu. This map is confidential, but I was able to seize an opportunity of copying it, having provided myself with materials for the purpose, and I shall send a fair copy to your Excellency as soon as possible.

The majority of the masons, stone-cutters, &c., are Italian, and I gather that there was a good deal of discontent amongst them at not receiving all their pay, which they seemed to think is retained by some of the Company's officials.

Some difficulty is experienced by the prohibition of the use of dynamite, the only explosive used being the powder supplied by the Turkish Government, and, consequently, blasting operations are impossible in many wet places. There is also an absence of a suitable ballast, which has to be brought from near Konia to the rail-head, and is even then of far too small size.

As showing the state of poverty throughout the country, it is remarkable that large numbers of men—Turks, Armenians, and Circassians—have come on foot from such distances as Siraz and Erzeroum on the mere chance of being engaged to work as labourers at the rate of 7 piastres a-day; the wages vary from that sum to 12 or 13 piastres. Trains now run daily from Konia to the rail-head with ballast and railway material, and from the rail-head the whole way to Konia I met many waggons with stores.

In fact, as far as it goes, the line is being made in the best way. The present rolling-stock is only temporary, being borrowed from the Haidar Pasha Konia line.

I shall forward Military Route Reports of my journey, on which nothing else of importance occurred.

The whole of the country passed through appeared to be in a thoroughly peaceable state, Moslems and Christians apparently living in much better harmony than is the case in the north-east of this vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARTHUR F. TOWNSHEND.

No. 38.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 11.)

(No. 242.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 5, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 155 of the 8th March, respecting the disturbance at Hounan, in the neighbourhood of Mush, I have the honour to state that, having received from Mrs. Rendel Harris a printed account (from No. 81 of "Pro Armenia") of an alleged massacre on the occasion referred to, I gave the Grand Vizier the list of names and other details given in the account, and begged his Highness to make a strict inquiry with a view to the proper punishment of the guilty. The Grand Vizier directed a telegram to be sent to the Vali of Bitlis ordering him to institute a judicial inquiry.

I have also referred the matter to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 39.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received April* 11.)

(No. 248.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 6, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting the formation of three companies of "Seyyaré" gendarmes (flying battalions), composed of Circassian immigrants, with a view, possibly, to their being used as a check on the turbulence of the Kurds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 11.)
Sir, *Bitlis, March* 19, 1904.

ON the 9th August last I had the honour to inform your Excellency that the authorities had begun the formation of a new force of "Seyyaré" gendarmes (flying battalions), fifty men having been enrolled at that time. Since then some 200 more have been added, and the force now consists of three companies. With the exception of a few Kurds of Bitlis and one or two Lesghis, all the new gendarmes and their officers are Circassian immigrants, namely, from the Boulanik and other districts in the north of this province.

At the present moment the greater part of this force is at Mush, but a detachment is in Gharzan, and I learn from an American traveller that he had met a few either in the district of Jesire (Vilayet of Diarbekir) or on the opposite bank of the Tigris, in the Province of Mosul.

The fact of the employment of these men in Gharzan, where Kurdish feuds and raids on the Diarbekir Road have been causing some trouble to the authorities, and for the collection of taxes, especially among the Hamidie of Varts, suggests the possibility that it may be the intention of the Government to use the Circassian immigrants as a check on the turbulence of the Kurds. Such a scheme would evidently be in accordance with the traditional Ottoman policy of employing one race against another, and the possession of an effective force of non-Kurdish Moslems may perhaps enable the civil authorities to obtain some measure of control over the Hamidie, who now enjoy, as individuals, under Zekki Pasha's patronage, an immunity from all authority which the Government can hardly have intended to confer on them, even when called to the colours.

Meanwhile, it is perhaps natural that these men should avail themselves of their position as gendarmes to rob and oppress the Armenians, who dread them at least as much as the regular Kurdish Zaptics.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 40.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 66.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April* 12, 1904.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 62 of the 6th instant, I am informed by Count Benckendorff that, with a view to joint action at Mush and Sassoon by the Consuls of France, Russia, and England, instructions have been sent to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to confer with you and the French Ambassador on the subject.

No. 41.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir C. Scott.

(No. 168 A.)
Foreign Office, April 19, 1904.

Sir,

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me to-day, and told me that he had heard from Count Lamsdorff that the Russian Government regarded favourably the Agreements recently concluded between this country and the French Republic. These Agreements might even, Count Lamsdorff thought, form a useful precedent, which might hereafter be followed in the case of Russia and Great Britain.

His Excellency told me that instructions had been given to the Russian Consul in Armenia to co-operate with his French and British colleagues in an endeavour to establish better relations in the neighbourhood of Sassun and Mush. The Russian Government, however, learned that a very large Turkish force was being maintained in that part of Armenia. It was believed to number about 38,000 men, a strength which seemed to the Russian Government altogether excessive, and likely to lead to serious trouble, and perhaps to a general massacre of Armenians. The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople had called the attention of the Porte to this matter, and his Excellency expressed a hope that Sir Nicholas O'Conor would be instructed to do the same. I promised that I would make inquiries as to the facts.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 42.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 148.)
Foreign Office, April 22, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 242 of the 5th April, relative to disturbances at Hommn, in the neighbourhood of Mush.

I approve your action in urging the Grand Vizier to direct that inquiries should be made into the circumstances of the case.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 43.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 71.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April* 23, 1904.

ARMENIA.

With reference to my telegram No. 66 of the 12th instant, I was again informed by Count Benckendorff on the 19th instant that instructions had been sent to your Russian colleague to co-operate for improving the situation at Sassoon and Mush with the French Ambassador and yourself.

The Russian Government had heard, he said, that a force of 38,000 had been concentrated in those districts by the Turks. This number seemed to be excessive and might lead to trouble, and as representations had already been made on the subject by the Russian Ambassador, he hoped that you would do likewise. I promised his Excellency that I would inquire as to the facts of the case.

What information have you as to the number of troops now in these districts, and how far have they been augmented?

The Turkish forces, according to our information, do not exceed 6,000 regulars, which number might be increased by drawing 2,000 more from Kharput. But there has been a talk of forming an additional force of Hamidieh cavalry, and 7,000 militia have been called out.

No. 44.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 69.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 25, 1904.

ARMENIAN disturbances.

Our latest information is to the effect that the Ottoman Government has called out eight battalions of Redifs to replace the seven battalions sent against the insurgents of Susun; the total number of troops amounting to 12,000 men. The mobilization of Hamidieh cavalry is denied here, and we have no confirmation of it.

The estimate of the Russian Ambassador as to the number of troops concentrated in that district is, I have no doubt, greatly exaggerated; but I am inquiring of the Consuls, and have promised my Russian colleague to give him such information as I may obtain.

On seeing the Grand Vizier to-day, I told his Highness that the Russians being naturally particularly susceptible at the present moment, I thought he would do well to avoid, as far as possible, anything likely to excite them.

The Grand Vizier replied that the sole and only object of this military activity was to restrain the Kurds from the raiding he had reason to apprehend, and to cope with the insurgents.

No. 45.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 28.)

(No. 284.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 20, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, respecting the views of the new Vali of Bitlis on the situation in that province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 45.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 12.)

Bitlis, April 2, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the new Vali of Bitlis arrived on the 17th ultimo, having travelled by Alexandretta and Diarbekir. The general impression created by Ferid Bey has been good, and though he has not yet had time to show by any definite action what line he will pursue, yet there have been one or two slight indications that he does not intend to be guided solely by the tribal Chiefs and fanatical Sheikhs of the town.

I have had one long interview with him, and although it is too early for me to form any estimate as to his character, I venture to submit the following remarks on our conversation:—

His Excellency's attitude towards me was extremely cordial, and he seemed anxious to hear my opinions on the situation and the needs of the province, practically admitting that he had as yet very little information as to the true state of affairs.

I urged him to take any steps in his power to induce the agricultural population to sow their fields in good time, pointing out that owing to the insecurity of the country and to the general apprehension as to what may occur in Sassun, the usual autumn sowing had been largely neglected, and that unless the Armenian cultivators had some assurance that they would be allowed to profit by their labour and relieved from their present fear of almost certain spoliation, they were likely to leave their fields unsown in the spring also, with the result that the whole province would be threatened with famine, and moreover would produce but a very small sum in taxation.

The Governor seemed to appreciate the importance of this matter and assured me that he would endeavour to improve the existing conditions of administration and justice, with special regard to the treatment of the villagers by gendarmes, so that the people might be encouraged to carry on their field work as usual; in this connection he asked me with some insistence whether, in my opinion, such an improvement would have the desired result, or whether the Armenian population were looking beyond justice and administration to a change in the political condition of the country. He seemed at first somewhat surprised at my conviction that if a reasonable degree of justice were assured, the committees and insurgents would find but little support, but I think he was more disposed to agree with me when I pointed out that we were speaking of a rude and ignorant peasantry such as in all countries thinks first of its crops and cattle.

With regard to Sassun, his Excellency seemed more anxious to hear my opinion than to express his own. The only point as to which he declared himself convinced was that the numbers of the revolutionaries have been much exaggerated, and that there can be but little over 200 come from abroad to the mountains. He pressed me to say whether I thought the Government should take action against them or not, to which I replied that if he could be quite certain that his soldiers and officers, subaltern as well as superior, would not exceed their instructions and would not involve the innocent with the guilty, the removal of the cause of so much uncertainty would be a clear gain; but if he could not absolutely insure the fulfilment of this condition, in that case I should say that no action should be taken unless the insurgents rendered it inevitable, for the commission of excesses by the troops would be merely playing into the hands of the insurgents.

I mentioned the statement made to your Excellency by the Grand Vizier (Mr. Lamb's Memorandum No. 74 of the 27th February, paragraph 2), that the Sassun revolutionaries had taken forcible possession of some twenty-five Mussulman villages of the plain, in order to show the Vali what exaggerated accounts had been sent to Constantinople before his arrival, and I hope he may correct this in his reports. I am unable to say on what basis of fact the story rests, but am confident that it is not true in the form in which it reached the Grand Vizier. The revolutionaries have been exacting supplies and moneys from Armenians of the plain, and may perhaps have treated some Moslems in the same way, though this seems improbable; or the villages meant may be some of those in the mountains, but the story must have been invented or much distorted in the interest of those who desire either disturbances or military movements which would not otherwise be sanctioned by the Central Government.

In some Armenian quarters it is feared that owing to the supplies of the insurgents having been restricted by the number of soldiers now quartered in and near Moush, they will be obliged to take the initiative shortly, before their situation becomes intolerable. I am inclined to think that this is unlikely, but mention the belief because it tends to show that the account given by the Grand Vizier is inaccurate.

Those of the Redifs who were called out on the 6th March, have now been dismissed. It is rumoured that they were summoned on account of alarmist telegrams sent by Salih Pasha to Constantinople, and that they have been disbanded because their Commandant Said Bey, temporarily at the head of the garrison here, reported that he had no need of them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 46.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 28.)

(No. 285. Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 18, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 242 of the 5th instant and previous correspondence respecting the condition of affairs in the Sassun district, I have the honour to report the following information which has reached me through the Porte:—

The Officer Commanding at Kulp telegraphed on the 14th instant that the number of revolutionaries operating from Talori, which a month ago was only 200, had been increased to between 300 and 400. Of these, however, barely 100, according to his estimate, were men trained to the use of arms and properly equipped. The remainder were peasants, whose natural inclination was to live at peace, but who had been induced by importunity, threats, or actual force to join the bands. These men had amongst them only seventeen Russian Mausers, with less than a hundred rounds apiece, the majority being armed with old rifles procured from the Kurds and including a proportion of Winchesters and Martinis. Against these he had under his command two Nizam battalions fully armed and equipped and numbering 500 men, which he considered more than sufficient to protect his district from the Talori bands. With a view to preventing the latter from proceeding to fresh acts of aggression which they might be encouraged to do were he to remain inactive awaiting instructions from head-quarters, he proposed to move out to Ardgonk, Ghuzuak, and Aktchesir, after which he would be able to report further on the ulterior measures to be taken as regards Talori. Subsequently, however, he appears to have been informed that the revolutionaries had burned the village of Ardgonk also. According to information received by the Porte from another source, they also attacked a mixed village named Latchkan, situated about five hours west of Moush, in the Sandjak of Ghindj, where they are said to have killed 30 Mussulmans. The Mutessarif of Ghindj reports that the people of Latchkan are appealing to the surrounding villages for help and that the excitement is consequently assuming increasing proportions. The troops in Kulp being required to operate from that side against the Talori bands, he recommends that a battalion from Moush should be sent to Latchkan to keep the population in hand and prevent the disturbance from extending over a wider area.

The Vali of Bitlis also reported on the 14th instant that he had dispatched a company of "Seyyare" gendarmerie to Kulp, and had reiterated his instructions to the Mutessarif to take all possible precautions to prevent the population becoming involved in the disorders.

He also stated that orders had been given for the arrest and prosecution of four Kurds of Bozikian and three of Khizvank, who were suspected of selling bullets to the revolutionaries, over 80 lbs. weight having been found in one house.

On the 16th instant the Armenian Patriarch received a message from the Palace, informing him of the reports respecting the incident of Latchkan, and inviting him to exert his influence towards the maintenance of tranquillity, and, telegraphing under the same date, Mr. Heathcote reports that the Vali had left for Moush accompanied by the Public Prosecutor and Examining Magistrate and two members of the Episcopal Council, and that he desired the Bishop to accompany him, but that the Bishop declined to do so without the previous authorization of the Patriarch.

We shall know shortly whether the mediation of the Armenian Ecclesiastics is likely to be successful. If it fails, the occasion will be offered for the intervention of the Consuls. I have spoken to my Russian and French colleagues, who have both received instructions to confer with me on the subject. A difficulty, however, which I have foreseen for some time, arose as to whether the Russian Government will allow such of the insurgents as have come from Russia to return, and M. Zinovieff said he must consult his Government on this point before giving an answer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 47.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 76.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 29, 1904.*

ARMENIAN disturbances.

My Russian colleague informs me that he saw the Grand Vizier this morning, and that his Highness told him the insurgents had refused the mediation of the Bishops. According to a telegram from Consul at Erzeroum, they are reported to have burnt twenty-five houses and killed thirty Kurds at Latchican. His Highness said the insurgents numbered about 2,000.

I hear from Vice-Consul at Bitlis that there has been severe fighting between the Kurds and insurgents, in which the former lost twenty-five. It is said that some twelve villages have been burnt, but it is not clear by which party.

At present Consular mediation seems hopeless in face of defiant attitude of insurgents, but in any case the Russian Consul at Bitlis only left Constantinople to-day on his return to his post.

On Monday the Grand Vizier gave me the most positive assurances that everything possible was being done by the Imperial Government to keep the Kurds in hand. I am making the most earnest representations, in concert with the Russian and French Ambassadors, with a view to preventing any massacre. As there are some fourteen battalions round Moush, the Turkish Government should be able to do so.

No. 48.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 77.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April 30, 1904.*

ARMENIA. I approve your representations as reported in your telegram No. 76 of yesterday.

The worst possible impression will be created if the Turkish authorities fail to keep the Kurds in order.

The presence of a large Turkish force in Armenia could only be justified upon the assumption that it was necessary to prevent disorders and excesses, and exception has been taken to it.

No. 49.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 304. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 25, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 285 of the 18th instant, respecting mediation between the Sassun revolutionaries and the Turkish Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of despatches from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis on this subject.

Mr. Heathcote comments on the effect which the arrest of the Vicar Bishop of

Moush will have upon the proposed negotiations, but, as your Lordship is aware, the Bishop was released shortly after his arrest on the representations of the Armenian Patriarch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 49.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 13. Confidential.)
Sir, *Bitlis, April 9, 1904.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 18th March, I have the honour most respectfully to submit the opinion that such informal negotiations as have been ordered by His Majesty the Sultan are unlikely, in view of the few indications I have of the temper of the Sassun insurgents, to produce much result.

In the first place, the refusal of the Imperial Government to give the proceedings an official character, in accordance with the Patriarch's request that an officer should accompany his agents, will tend to throw doubt on his Beatitude's assertions that he is acting on behalf of His Majesty; and, moreover, I understand that the Patriarch himself is not regarded with any great confidence by the majority of the Armenians in these parts, and if they suspect him of being too Turkish in his sympathies, it is probable that the revolutionaries would distrust him still more.

If the numbers of the declared insurgents are really as low as the estimates of the Sultan and the Vali, and if there is any foundation for the belief mentioned in my despatch No. 12 of the 2nd April that their supplies are restricted by the number of troops now quartered in and near Moush, it is possible that they might welcome any proposals that offered them a way of escape with any certainty of personal immunity, but, in my humble opinion, it will be difficult to give effective guarantees for this condition.

According to the reports accepted by His Majesty, seven-eighths of the force are Ottoman subjects, and therefore cannot be escorted under safe conduct to the frontier, and no amnesty can secure them against arrest and molestation if they return to their homes in districts where the Sultan's authority is real. Arrears of taxes would be a sufficient pretext, and the local authorities would have ingenuity enough to find others if that were to fail.

If on the other hand the insurgents are, or think themselves, strong enough to make any effective resistance now or later to the troops, they would probably refuse any terms that the Government could at present offer; if such a refusal were not at once followed by an attack in overwhelming force, the overtures would be ascribed to fear, and this belief would add not merely to the confidence but also to the numbers of the insurgents.

Unfortunately I have no means of ascertaining the real intentions of the effective force of the revolutionaries. As to the former, it is generally believed that they have abandoned all hope of securing reforms except through European, and preferably British, intervention. If this is so, though they may not desire to provoke hostilities, they would wish to keep the question open as long as possible, and would be likely to regret the mere offer of personal safety even if they could regard it as secure, unless it were the only alternative to immediate annihilation.

With regard to their numbers, no one here except the Vali, who now declares himself in agreement with the Central Government, estimates them as less than 700 or 800 armed men, besides those among the villagers who are ready to join a successful rising.

It is impossible, however, to believe that the Grand Vizier can be really and finally convinced of the accuracy of the official estimate, or he would not have amassed a force of 10,000 men or more for the contingency of operations against 400. The Vali professes to regard my estimate of the troops collected as greatly exaggerated, but the garrison of the Moush Sanjak last summer was six battalions—Mr. Shipley informs me that four more have been sent from Erzeroum and Erzinguian, and I am told that a battalion quite recently went from Sairt to the southern border of the disturbed district; this, however, the Vali denies—and another from Kharput, and that one battalion from Van crossed the lake last week and proceeded westwards.

As it is incredible also that 400 men should have taken forcible possession of twenty-five Moslem villages of the plain, besides maintaining whatever they may possess in the mountains, it would appear that at least two parties here, possibly the civil and military authorities, inspired by different motives, send conflicting reports to Constantinople, and that the Government has not yet decided which to accept.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 49.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 15. Confidential.)
Sir, *Bitlis, April 9, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Armenian Vicar-Bishop of Bitlis received a telegram yesterday morning from his colleague at Moush, stating that he and all the members of his council had been arrested, and begging for intercession with the Vali, so that he might at least be set free till after Easter, which falls to-morrow.

The Prelate consequently called on the Vali, but was unable to effect anything, and was only told that the arrests had been made on political grounds.

I was unable to get positive confirmation of the report until his return from the interior, when hearing that the Vali was starting next morning for Moush, I also called upon him though by then the hour was rather late.

His Excellency did not receive me, but deputed his son to do so. All that this gentleman was able to obtain from his father in reply to my inquiries was that the Bishop, with his councillors and certain other persons were charged with having made false declarations—"d'avoir fait des déclarations mensongères"—and that without making a thorough investigation, for which he was starting next day, he could give me no details.

The Governor-General did not, however, start this morning, being indisposed. His journey, when it does take place, must occupy at least three days, with the roads in the state to which they are reduced every year when the snows melt.

It is hardly likely that after this incident, whatever may be its cause or the merits of the case, it will be possible for the Sultan to employ the Vicar-Bishop, or indeed any local ecclesiastic, as intermediary in dealing with the Sassun insurgents, and there will probably be considerable delay in finding a suitable agent even if the Ottoman Government is sincere in its desire to negotiate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 50.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 305.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 26, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of despatches received from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting changes in the administration of the Lebanon, brought about by the Governor under the pressure of the Palace at Constantinople, and particularizing certain charges of corruption made against the Governor's family.

The selection of Mouzaffer Pasha for the Governorship of the Lebanon was more or less forced upon the Ambassadors by their desire to find some neutral candidate who would reunite the votes of the Russian and French Ambassadors, but I fear it is now only too evident that the choice was not a happy one, and that Mouzaffer Pasha is proving himself an incompetent administrator as well as a subservient tool of the Yildiz officials, whose interference with the affairs of the Lebanon may probably provoke ere long strong representations from the Ambassadors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 50.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 26. Confidential.)
Sir, *Beyrout, April 9, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 9 of the 28th January, and to previous reports on the Lebanon relating to the baneful effects of Palace interference in the administration of the province, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that a rumour was lately current in the mountain that Mouzaffer Pasha would shortly dismiss Nessib Bey Djemblat the actual Kaimakam of the Druse district, and replace him by an Emir of the Arslans, or by some person belonging to that party.

In reply to my verbal inquiries on the subject, his Excellency informed me that he had no such intention "for the present," but he might be compelled to remove Nessib Bey later on owing to pressure from the Palace, where, he stated, the Djemblats are not in favour, having "the reputation of being English," whereas the Arslans are known to be loyal Ottomans. He also gave me to understand that he would seize an opportunity, such as failure of health (Nessib Bey has a delicate constitution) or mismanagement of the affairs of the Kaimakamiyeh, to request him to resign.

I then reminded his Excellency that last summer, when I was on leave of absence, he dismissed a Maronite Kaimakam and three Mudirs, all capable and faithful officers, merely at the request of my French colleague, on the plea that they were "anti-French" ("des anti-Français"), and that he had written to me at the time expressing his regret at having to dispense with the services of these persons as he knew them to be my friends.

These measures, followed now by the dismissal of a Druse Kaimakam on similar grounds, would give rise to unfavourable comments, and oblige me to take official notice of his unfriendly attitude.

I also mentioned that the sympathies of Maronites and Catholics with France, of Greek Orthodoxes with Russia, and of Druses and Mahommedans, &c., with England, are well known, and have existed ever since the establishment of the organic law, but this state of things has never interfered with their peaceful Government as loyal Ottomans for over forty years.

In speaking of Nessib Bey's official conduct, the Governor's only accusation was "lack of energy." His Excellency, however, admitted that during sixteen months' service there had been no complaint of injustice in the Shouf; all taxes and arrears had been fully paid up, and the few disturbances that had occurred in different parts of the district between Christians and Druses were undoubtedly the work of the opposition.

Nessib Bey had also given proofs of his desire to please the Government (1) by defraying the building expenses of the new serail of the Druse Kaimakamiyeh, amounting to 900 napoleons; (2) by collecting 100,000 piastres in the Shouf for the wounded in Macedonia, while the contributions of all the other districts amounted only to 80,000 piastres; and (3) by collecting 8,500 signatures in the Shouf to a memorial last year in favour of Mouzaffer Pasha against 4,000 signatures in the remaining five districts.

I further informed the Governor that I was well aware that a sum of 164,000 piastres (1,500 napoleons) had been deposited for some time past in the hands of a well-known banker in Beyrout by a certain Milhem Bey Nekad, who was being proclaimed in the mountain by the Arslans as the successor of Nessib Bey, and that this individual was in league with a friend and adviser of the Governor named Nadra Bey Montran, who is secretly working with Emir Mustapha Arslan for the fall of Nessib Bey.

Milhem Nekad belongs to one of the five feudal Druse families in the Lebanon, and might be eligible for the post of Kaimakam should the Djemblat and Arslan candidatures be set aside, but unfortunately his antecedents are unsatisfactory. During Rustems and Naoums Governorships he was imprisoned for inciting Druses against Christians in his village of Abey. In the first instance he was imprisoned for three months and in the second for twenty-four days only, owing to the clemency of Naoum Pasha.

I should also mention that this Milhem Nekad was one of the Druses who signed the scurrilous petition to your Excellency against the Consulate during my absence last summer.

Mouzaffer Pasha denied all knowledge of these transactions with Nekad, and assured me that no change would be made without my previous knowledge of his intentions, but I believe he is bent on finding some plausible pretext to dismiss Nessib Bey sooner or

later, being under the impression that the return to power of the Arslans will serve his own interests at head-quarters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 50.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 31.) *Beyrout, April 16, 1904.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 26, of the 9th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that Mouzaffer Pasha called here yesterday and stated that he had decided to part with Nessib Bey Djemblat; but before taking any definite steps he wished to come to an understanding, if possible, with myself.

His Excellency began by reiterating the motives (as already explained in my last report) which compelled him to adopt this measure, and endeavoured to persuade me that by supporting Nessib Bey he was sacrificing his salary of Mushir, amounting to 2,000*l.* a-year, which was promised to him on appointment, in addition to his civil pay as a Governor-General. His friends at Constantinople had strongly urged him to ingratiate himself by every possible means with the Palace, and that the dismissal of Nessib Bey would be sure to create a favourable impression and facilitate matters. On the other hand, he said that, owing to a late disagreeable incident of a private character, it was advisable that their official and social relations should cease.

With regard to the first objections raised by the Governor, I expressed my grave doubts that persons in high position at the Palace were so vitally interested in Lebanon politics as to interfere in the appointment of a Kaïmakam; but I was well aware that his Excellency was acting under the influence and guidance of certain members of his family and their agent, Nadra Bek Moutran, who is in league with the Arslans, and has cognizance of the sum of money in deposit for the Kaïmakamyet of Shouf, as reported to your Excellency in my previous despatch on this subject. My reply displeased his Excellency, who nearly lost his self-control in endeavouring to refute these statements.

His other objections to Nessib Bey were subsequently calmly discussed, and as a member of the Governor's family is concerned, I beg to inclose a Confidential Memorandum of the incident which has really caused the rupture.

Finding that Nessib Bey's position would become untenable, and that he would be subjected to interminable annoyances if he remained in office, I came to the following arrangement with Mouzaffer Pasha:—

1. That if Nessib Bey resigned, his Excellency would express his regret in writing, and thank him for his past services.

2. That this letter would be followed by a favourable report to the Sublime Porte, and an application for a high class decoration in recognition of his services.

3. It was also understood that the Governor would appoint a friendly-disposed Acting Kaïmakam until we could arrive at an understanding as to the successor of Nessib Bey, and his Excellency at the same time assured me that the appointment of either Emir Mustapha or Emir Shekib, or the former's nephew, Emir Sami, was not contemplated by him.

When I communicated these conditions to Nessib Bey, he agreed to them without hesitation, stating that he was glad of the opportunity afforded him of resigning the post which he had accepted and held only to satisfy his large number of friends and supporters in the Lebanon, both among the Druses and Christians.

The Acting Kaïmakam selected by the Governor in agreement with myself is Sheikh Abdul Hamid Talhouk, Mudir of Aley, who is a faithful adherent of Nessib Bey, and a capable and intelligent officer.

These proceedings of Mouzaffer Pasha have agitated the populace of the mountain in general, and might easily give rise to hostile demonstrations, but Nessib Bey is retiring quietly to his country seat near Sidon, and his friends in the Administration, &c., have been warned to use their efforts in the interests of public peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 51.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 307. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 25, 1904.*

ON receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 71 of the 23rd instant, I thought it well to check the information we had received from the Consuls in Armenia by consulting the Grand Vizier in regard to the number of troops recently called out in consequence of the insurrectionary outbreak in the the Sassun district.

His Highness' Reports confirmed those from Bitlis and elsewhere, and gave the number of battalions as fifteen who were actually under arms, and four more who were ordered to be ready for mobilization in case of need.

The Russian Ambassador, who had made fresh representations to Tewfik Pasha earlier in the morning, spoke to me on the subject, and showed me very confidentially a Report which he had received from his Consul at Erzeroum, in which over 40,000 men were said to be mobilized, while adding that it was believed that the whole military division of the 4th "Order" had been warned for service. This Report had, he said, been sent direct to the Governor-General of the Caucasus, who had, without waiting for further confirmation, assumed that it was correct, and sent it to St. Petersburgh, hinting at the same time that it would be advisable under the circumstances to mobilize the Russian frontier "corps d'armée." M. Zinoview's own information, derived from other sources, evidently did not support the exaggerated reports of the Consul at Erzeroum, and he seemed to think that fifteen to eighteen battalions were probably the utmost concentrated in those parts. He said that he would be glad, however, if I pointed out to the Grand Vizier the objections to a large concentration of Turkish troops in those parts, particularly at the present moment, and, in compliance with his request and with what I presumed to be your Lordship's wishes, I spoke in this sense to his Highness as reported to your Lordship in my telegram No. 69 of to-day.

The Grand Vizier said that he could not understand the anxiety shown by the Russian Ambassador, who must be fully informed in regard to the insurrection, as many of the revolutionists had come from Russia across the frontier. It was difficult to say their precise number, but he was inclined to put the total of insurgents in the Sassun district at about 1,000, of whom perhaps a hundred were Russians.

A military force of five battalions surrounded the insurgents, and every precaution had been taken and the strictest orders sent to the Valis to prevent the Kurds from approaching the disturbed districts, as he was afraid of the outrages they might commit.

The Bishop of Bitlis had left on the 20th instant to join his Moush colleague and several members of the Council, as also the Procureur-General and other civil functionaries. He could not say what result would attend the mediation of the Bishops, though he was afraid the insurgents would refuse to surrender. Should this prove to be the case he wished to know what course I suggested.

I said that I thought it not improbable the overtures of the Bishops would be rejected, as I heard the insurgent chief Andronik had stated that he could not rely upon the Imperial Government respecting the promises made by the Bishops, particularly as the Government was reported to have refused to send at the same time a properly accredited Representative of the Sultan, invested with full powers to treat and to guarantee their safety.

In this case I thought the Consuls of Great Britain, Russia, and France might with advantage be called upon to mediate, it being clearly understood, of course, that the assurances given by them to the insurgents would be fully respected by the Imperial Government. It was, however, premature to discuss this suggestion until we knew exactly the result of the present efforts at mediation. There would probably be some difficulty in knowing where to send the insurgents, even if they laid down their arms. Those who had crossed the Persian frontier could possibly be easily expelled, but if any considerable number had come from Russia, I doubted whether the Governor of the Caucasus would be willing to allow them to return. It might be possible, however, to arrange for a certain number going to America.

The Grand Vizier replied that he did not anticipate that there would be any objection to this course, as they could be given a "sauf conduit" to Alexandretta and put on board there.

Previous to my seeing the Grand Vizier, the Russian Ambassador had told me he had had no answer from his Government as to whether they would permit those insurgents who were Russian subjects to return, but that he thought it would depend in great measure on their number. The Governor-General of the Caucasus was opposed to it on the ground that the number was very great, but he was endeavouring to disabuse his mind of this idea. His Excellency added that the newly-appointed Russian Consul to Bitlis had been detained here longer than he expected, but that he was leaving to-morrow and would proceed via Tiflis, so that he ought to be at Bitlis within twelve or fourteen days.

The French Chargé d'Affaires informed me that the French Consul at Van had received instructions from his Government to co-operate with his British and Russian colleagues of Bitlis in case of mediation, and that he would be prepared to do so at any moment, if events shaped themselves this way.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 52.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Spring-Rice.

(No. 187.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 4, 1904.*

THE Russian Ambassador spoke to me again to-day upon the subject of the large force maintained by Turkey in Armenia. He told me that the Russian Government had received from their Consul at Erzeroum a statement to the effect that there were now 220,000 troops of one kind or another in Armenia. I expressed surprise at the magnitude of this total, of which his Excellency was not able to give me the particulars. The Memorandum which he brought with him, stated that there were in the month of March 87,000 infantry and 25,000 Hamidié troops, but the balance was not clearly accounted for. I communicated to his Excellency the substance of Sir Nicholas O'Conor's telegram No. 76 of the 29th April, and of my reply dated the following day.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 53.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 315.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 3, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting certain disturbances among the Kurds of that district arising from a feud between Ibrahim Pasha, General of Hamidieh, and Khalil Bey, Chief of the Karakotchi, and also an officer in the Hamidieh.

This despatch is of interest as giving an account of one of the chronic internecine feuds of the Kurdish tribes which are typical of the state of the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 53.

Acting Vice-Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 2.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, April 19, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that during the last ten days there has been very considerable disturbance among the Kurds of the district lying between Diarbekir and Orfa.

It would appear that these disturbances originated in a feud between Ibrahim Pasha, Liwa of Hamadieh and Chief of the Milli tribe, and Khalil Bey, Mirahi of Hamadieh and Chief of the Karakotchi.

On my way from Orfa frequent rumours of fighting reached me, and the state of

the country is so unsettled that even at Berédjik caravans were waiting, not daring to take the road. Since Saturday last, the date of my arrival here, communication has been interrupted on that route, but I gather that the circumstances are approximately as follows:—

Ibrahim Pasha, with 500 mounted troops, under pretext of having received instructions in that sense from Constantinople, attempted to surround Khalil Bey in his village of Mezar. The latter, however, succeeded in making his escape, and fled with 100 of his troops to Orfa, whence it would seem that he telegraphed to His Majesty the Sultan, asking for protection. So far no reply has been received.

Meanwhile, Ibrahim Pasha, assembling some 10,000 mounted men, has pillaged and burnt upwards of fifty Karakotchi villages, and on Saturday last some of his cavalry entered the town of Sevarek (60 miles from here), and, aided by the Milli inhabitants, laid waste the quarter occupied by the Karakotchi.

Thirty persons were killed and thirty-five houses burnt. The Turkish Government are said to be distributing relief to some 2,500 refugees (Karakotchis) who have lost all their flocks and movable property.

Ibrahim Pasha is actually encamped at Mezar, the former head-quarters of his rival, Khalil Bey.

On Sunday last his Excellency the Vali dispatched 100 mounted troops to maintain order at Sevarek.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

No. 54.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 320.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 3, 1904.*

I CALLED upon the Grand Vizier again yesterday in order to impress upon him the importance of not leaving the local authorities in doubt as to the severe punishment that would be inflicted upon any military or civil officials who failed to take prompt and effective measures to prevent excesses on the part of the Kurds of Armenia, and to inform his Highness that your Lordship had hastened to let me know that any failure to keep these turbulent tribes in order would create the worst possible impression.

His Highness replied by once more assuring me that the most stringent orders to this effect had already been issued, and the military authorities had instructions not to allow the Kurds to approach anywhere near the seat of hostilities.

The Grand Vizier then showed me a report stating that several bands of insurgents, said to number between 3,000 and 4,000, were reported to be assembling in the neighbourhood of Van and in the Caza of Pasha, as also at Kaghizman and the Soghanli Dagh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 55.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 324.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 4, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting the popular opinion in that locality in regard to the Russo-Japanese war and its bearing on the situation in the Armenian provinces.

The animosity so commonly expressed towards Russia in connection with the war may have influenced the attitude of the Russian Consuls, and impelled them to send exaggerated reports to their Government of the military measures taken to meet the danger arising from the action of the Armenian revolutionaries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 55.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 9.)

Van, April 8, 1904.

Sir,

IT may interest your Excellency to know how the Russo-Japanese war is regarded here, the feeling of the provincial Turk and of the local officials being probably much the same all over the country.

The most noticeable feature was the voicing, as soon as it was known that war had been declared, of an almost universal dislike of Russia. Turks, Armenians, and the few Persians who are here, united in hoping that that country would be defeated.

It was also interesting to observe that the higher officials were very reticent in company, but spoke their minds freely to me when alone. The military officers were more outspoken, began to talk of a possible war with Russia, and hoped for an English alliance to make it possible. They say that the Turkish military opinion regards the retention of this part of the country as impossible against Russia, so long as the latter has command of the Black Sea, and can land forces at selected points on its southern shores, while at the same time advancing from the Caucasus. They say that unless a friendly fleet were in the Black Sea, practically the whole of Kurdistan would be abandoned to prevent the 4th Ordu from being cut off. I was struck by the anti-Russian attitude of the Persians, as tending to show that Russia's grip on their country is regarded with dislike as well as fear.

Perhaps the point brought out most clearly is how great an influence Russia has acquired in these parts of Persia and Turkey which are close to her frontier. Though the fact of her being at war, and of being, perhaps, beaten or checked, has allowed the voicing of sentiments which would not otherwise have been expressed, yet there is a general fear of the Russian Consul knowing them, and the latter seems to consider that his position, as such, gives him the right to control the expression of the feelings of Turkish subjects in a very significant way.

The Murakhas (Head of the Armenian community) expressed his hopes for the success of the Japanese in the presence of the Vali and other officials. This was reported to the Russian Vice-Consul, who sent word to the Murakhas that, in case of any troubles or "events," no Armenian need expect any help from him. He also expresses himself as surprised and pained at the "disloyal" attitude of the Armenians here towards Russia. On another occasion some Turkish officers, in talking to the French priests during a visit, also expressed their opinions on the war rather freely. This was also fully reported to the Russian Vice-Consul, who informed them that he was very displeased, and would report them and what they had said to his Embassy. It seems a curious state of affairs when a Turk may not talk without being reported to the Russian Embassy. It is believed that this war has probably postponed troubles which were to have arisen here from the action of Armenian revolutionists. In my No. 33 of the 27th October, 1903, on the subject of revolutionary bands crossing the frontier, I mentioned that the Turkish officials near the frontier thought that these bands came, not only with the knowledge, but with the assistance of Russian officials. It is now said that Russian Consuls have caused it to be known among Armenians that they are to keep quiet, and not bring on anything this year, nor precipitate matters. This is only hearsay and common talk, and, as far as Van is concerned, does not apply, my Russian colleague here not having, I believe, taken any such action. I was also interested in observing that the orders for the mobilization of the Redif, coming soon after the outbreak of the war, disquieted my Russian colleague very much, and for some time he evidently thought that this step was in view of possible action against Russia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. TYRRELL.

No. 56.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 327.)

Constantinople, May 5, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of an interesting Report which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, describing the precarious situation at present existing in that vilayet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 10.)

Van, April 11, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit my report of affairs in the vilayet during the past quarter.

As is usual at this time of year, the air has been full of rumours as to what is going to happen in the spring; and there has been a general feeling of anxiety and apprehension among the Christians. There are circumstances this year which make a pessimistic forecast more justifiable than usual, and if one did not know that this alarm recurs annually as the winter is drawing to its close, the outlook would appear grave.

There is the attitude of the Mussulman population, whose feeling of suspicion towards their Christian fellow-subjects, only dormant at the best of times, has been fed upon distorted accounts of what has been happening in Macedonia during the past year. This feeling is increased by reports of the intention of Armenian revolutionists to make a diversion here in favour of the Macedonian ones.

Revolutionists are said to be continually arriving in Van, disguised as Kurds; and the Kurds are quite ready to help them to do so, allowing them to pass over the frontier, and assisting them on their way, for adequate payment.

There can be no doubt, I think, that a certain number of revolutionists (from Russia chiefly) have succeeded in getting into Sassoon during the past autumn and winter. The steady concentration of Turkish troops about Mush is not for nothing. Still, it is very difficult to get authentic news from there, and it seems to me that the chief base of the reports current here of what is going on in Mush and Sassoon is that no news is allowed to come from those places, and that the Armenians here who have friends and relations there can get no news from them. A report emanating from the Americans at Bitlis arrived here in the end of February that there was a massacre in progress in Mush Plain; but it afterwards transpired that it was only "fear of a massacre" which they had intended to convey. "Fear of massacre" may be said to be perennial among the Armenians here, unfortunately, and by itself means very little.

The expression given to their feelings of dislike and suspicion by the Mussulmans, soldiers as well as civilians, has been alluded to by me on former occasions, and is one of the causes of there being more apprehension than usual this year. The Kurds, also, are said to be hopeful of receiving such orders this year as may enable them to repeat their doings in 1895–1896, or, at any rate, of being allowed to plunder the Armenian villages without interference. Instances have been brought to my notice of threats to this effect uttered by Kurds in the outlying districts. An American missionary, Mr. McDowell, who has been spending the winter between Jezire and Mosul, and in the southern fringe of Bohtan, reports that the Kurds there are very uncontrolled, and that their words and behaviour have led the Christians to fully expect an impending disaster. These Christians are mostly Nestorians, and their hope seems to be that, when the Armenian revolutionists have succeeded in bringing on a massacre, it should be confined to Armenians, and that the Turkish Government should be constrained to protect the Nestorians and to force the Kurds to differentiate between them and Armenians.

Moussa Bey, an influential Kurd of Karchikan, is said to have 5,000 Kurds ready, and to be inflaming them by exhibiting pictures of Mussulman women being ravished by Christians in Macedonia, &c. I told the Vali what had been reported to me about this, and Moussa Bey has been called in to Van, but whether on account of my representations or for some other object I cannot say.

The orders received here to call out the Redif, which I reported early in March, and the contemplated formation of a new Division (the 20th), to have its head-quarters at Mush, are also contributing causes to the general anxiety, there being no very apparent necessity for these steps. Thus every one is free to draw his own conclusions, and to put the worst construction on the facts.

My opinion of the present situation here is that there is no reason to apprehend any untoward events; and that things may well go on for another year, as they have done in the past. Still, I realize that a second factor has now to be reckoned with (the first being the chance that discontented Armenians may do something foolish, which we always have); this being the readiness of the Mussulmans to take action on very slight provocation, or merely on suspicion. Anything might happen, but I can see no reason why it should, nor do I see anything to substantiate the pessimistic views of some of the inhabitants. And I have reason to believe that the revolutionists and their friends have given up all ideas of making a disturbance this year—if they ever had such an idea. Such an intention was attributed to them, and it was believed by Turks and Armenians alike that they were determined to attract the attention of Europe this year.

Still, the outlook of the year is not encouraging. Taxes, as mentioned in my last Quarterly Report, continue to press heavily, and to be collected with unwonted energy. This winter has been exceptional, in that tax-collecting operations have not been suspended, as is usual, during the winter months, and there seems to be no hope that they will not continue during the rest of the year. The peasants, having no ready money with which to meet the peremptory demands of the tehsildars, have been borrowing, receiving 1 lira (18*s.* 3*d.*) for a promise of 18 chaps* of wheat after the next harvest, whereas the current price of wheat is about 3½ chaps to the lira.

I have already reported what I know of the formation of the 20th Division to the Military Attaché; but it must not be supposed that it means an immediate accession of strength to the Turkish regular forces of a complete division. It has been made up on paper by withdrawing battalions from the 7th, 8th, and 19th Divisions, which are thus denuded of their complements in proportion as the new division is completed. The 8th Division, for instance, is a full brigade short. The Turkish officers say that the men are forthcoming, and that the gaps will be filled directly, but I fancy that the real increase in strength will not be realized for some time.

The Vali tells me that the Kurd, Nimat, is to be turned out of Domi in the spring. Meanwhile, his misbehaviour there continues, and the villagers cannot attend to the agricultural operations necessary at the commencement of spring; and the longer his eviction is delayed, the more difficult will it be for the villagers to pay their taxes during the current year. This is the case reported in my Nos. 16, 18, and 31 of 1903.

I am informed that soldiers have lately forcibly collected £ T. 400 (365*l.*) in Jilu, the unfair taxation of which district was reported in my No. 25 of the 5th July, 1903.

In my last Quarterly Report I alluded to the impending vacancy in the Mutessarifilik of Hekkiari, and mentioned two candidates for the post. One of these, Ali Riza Bey, sometime Mektubji of Erzeroum, has received the appointment, but has apparently not yet left Constantinople. Opinions of him differ a good deal, but he would appear to be a capable man, if not a very straight one. Ghalib Pasha, a Vanli of bad reputation, is at present Acting Mutessarif.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

No. 57.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 16.)

(No. 332.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 9, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Grand Vizier informed me to-day, with reference to the condition of affairs in Armenia, that the Imperial troops, advancing into Sassoun, found the insurgents to the number of 1,500 in a fortified position at Gholieguzan, whom they dislodged after a severe combat, in which they lost over thirty men killed and wounded, the losses of the insurgents being unknown. An

* A "chap" = about 2½ bushels.

insurgent flag, a considerable quantity of ammunition, a cypher and important correspondence were subsequently seized.

His Highness assured me most positively that no Kurds or irregulars of any sort took part in these proceedings, and that a *procès verbal* of all that occurred had been drawn up on the spot by the Civil Functionaries accompanying the troops. He thought it not improbable that the insurgents would not be able to hold out very long, and that they would ask for an amnesty and pardon, which would be granted to them. The precise number of insurgents who had crossed the Russian frontier was not known, but his Highness did not believe it was considerable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 58.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 16.)

(No. 335. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 10, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 242 of the 5th ultimo, in which I informed your Lordship that I had referred to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis for verification the Armenian press account of the recent alleged outrages at Hounan in the neighbourhood of Moush, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Heathcote on the subject. The versions of the affair of course vary, but it seems to be believed by the Armenians of the neighbourhood that the account given by the "Pro Armenia" in its main features is correct, but that the first shot was fired by the revolutionaries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 58.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Bitlis, April* 23, 1904.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 5th instant, I have the honour to return herewith the printed account of the affair at Hounan, together with its envelope, which appears to have been tampered with before reaching Bitlis.

The local authorities from the first have minimized the importance of the incident, declaring that one gendarme was slightly wounded, and that no Armenians were killed, nor any excesses committed.

On the other hand it seems to be believed by all the Armenians that the account given by the "Pro Armenia" is accurate in its main features, the chief difference being the admission that the first shot was fired by the revolutionaries, who had come to the village.

The best information that I can obtain shows that the gendarmes came to Hounan and claimed the payment of taxes which had been collected by another party a few days earlier; that one man, saying that he must borrow money if compelled to pay again, went into a house, accompanied by a gendarme; that the latter, immediately on entering the house, was fired on by six insurgents, who had been concealed there, whereupon the fighting became general, and lasted some hours; and that at nightfall the insurgents escaped, while the gendarmes and Kurds, who had hastened to the spot from surrounding villages, and even from Moush, set to work to plunder the village under the circumstances described by the newspaper. Two of the village men are understood to have been killed, and some women and small children, the whole number being eight, while the gendarmes had two men wounded, and the insurgents suffered no loss. Most of the men had fled from the village, and I hear that but few of them have returned.

I must, however, admit that my information is not entirely reliable.

(Confidential.)

The Bishop of Moush sent me a message to the effect that as he had supplied full particulars of the incident to his Majesty's Consulate at Erzeroum, he preferred not to run the risk of the discovery that he had given me information on the subject.

I would beg that this last paragraph may be regarded as confidential.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 59.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 340.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 10, 1903.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 304 of the 26th April on the subject of the disturbances in Armenia and the arrest of Armenian Prelates, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting the release of the Vicar-Bishop of Moush and his Council, and the departure of the Vali of Bitlis for Moush.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 59.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 17.)
Sir, *Bitlis, April 23, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 15 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report that the Vicar-Bishop of Moush and the other persons arrested with him on the 5th were released on the 9th instant, the Armenian Easter Eve.

The following Friday, the 15th, the Vali summoned the Vicar-Bishop of Bitlis, and told him to be prepared to accompany him to Moush early the next morning, by Imperial Order. The Prelate, however, persuaded his Excellency to allow him to telegraph to the Patriarch, and to follow when instructions were received from his Hierarchical superior, pointing out that his sudden departure would greatly alarm the Armenians of the town, and that without instructions he would have no jurisdiction or *locus standi* in Moush, which is outside his diocese.

The Vali left on the 16th, taking with him the Public Prosecutor, the Examining Magistrate, two members of the Council of Administration, and two members of the Episcopal Council. The Bishop followed him on the 20th, having received the expected orders from the Patriarch.

It was supposed here that this journey was undertaken in order to examine the charges which had led to the arrest of the Bishop, and the presence of the judicial officials indicates that some legal inquiry was intended. The principal object may, however, be the investigation referred to in your Excellency's despatch of the 5th instant relative to the Houman incident, as to which I am reporting by this mail.

No one here has any certain knowledge of the cause of the arrests, but some leading Armenians believe that the Bishop was charged with sending a false and exaggerated account of the Houman incident to His Majesty's Consulate at Erzeroum; and if this, which is the only probable suggestion that I have heard, is accurate, the two questions are so closely connected that they may well form the subject of one inquiry.

On the day of the Bishop's departure, the 20th, I heard that rumours were current among prominent Moslems in Bitlis of an intention to employ the two Bishops as intermediaries in negotiating with the Sasun insurgents, but I think the Bishop of Bitlis had no idea of this when he left.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 60.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 341.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 10, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting rumours of recent fighting between Armenian insurgents and Turkish troops or Kurds in the neighbourhood of Sasun.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 60.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 19.)
Sir, *Bitlis, April 23, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that rumours have reached Bitlis of a conflict between Armenian revolutionaries and Turkish troops or Kurds. I understand that some of the former have sent a letter to sympathisers here declaring that a fight had occurred in a Kurdish village in the neighbourhood of Sasun, and that the Kurds when driven out of the village with a loss of twenty or thirty men had brought the corpses to Moush, where great excitement prevailed in consequence.

At about the same time some influential Moslems of Bitlis heard that there had been fighting near Hazo to the south of Sasun, in which the Turkish troops had lost fifteen or twenty men.

I am unable at present to say positively whether these two stories refer to the same incident, or whether either of them are true, but am inclined to regard the insurgent version as a corruption of that given by the Moslems, which would appear to have some foundation in fact.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

P.S.—A muleteer just arrived from Moush confirms the former of the foregoing rumours, and says that he left the town hastily because the military authorities were requisitioning pack animals to be sent with soldiers to Sasun.

W. J. H.

No. 61.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 343.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 10, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, on the subject of the recent fighting between Kurdish tribes under Ibrahim Pasha and Khalil Bey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Acting Vice-Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, April 25, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 2 of the 10th instant with regard to the fighting which has lately taken place between the forces of Ibrahim Pasha and Khalil Bey, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the disturbances seem to have originated in the theft of a number of camels owned by a very influential person at Constantinople.

Khalil Bey was accused of the crime, and instructions were accordingly sent to Ibrahim Pasha to punish him.

The camels in question have since been recovered, and I understand that a telegram has been sent to Constantinople minimizing the significance of the affair. I have good reason to believe, however, that the figures quoted in my last despatch on this subject were, if anything, considerably below the mark; and the circumstance that Abdul Kader Pasha, who was sent to maintain order and distribute relief at Sevarek, has asked for a battalion of soldiers to assist him, would seem to point in the same direction.

No fighting has been reported during the last few days; but caravans to and from Orfa follow a circuitous route and are accompanied by a strong guard.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. WILKIE YOUNG.

P.S.—26th April, 1904, 9 P.M. Since writing the above I have been informed that his Excellency the Vali and Ishak Pasha, commanding the Hamidieh, have both received orders to proceed to Sevarek to inquire into the state of affairs.

H. W. Y.

No. 62.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 341.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 10, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting an attack by the Armenians of Shenik in the Sasun district on the Lateliekan Kurds of the Badikker tribe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 62.

Acting Vice-Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, April 26, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that on the 8th April the Armenians of Shenik in the Sasun district attacked the Lateliekan Kurds of the Badikker tribe.

Twenty-two of the latter were killed and 18 wounded. Among the Armenians there were five casualties.

On the 20th instant Seyedin Pasha and Haji Reshid Agha, Kurd Chiefs, telegraphed to his Excellency the Vali from Farkin, offering to assist the Badikker Kurds in punishing the Armenians.

The offer was, however, peremptorily declined.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. WILKIE YOUNG.

No. 63.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 356.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 11, 1904.*

IN the course of a conversation I had yesterday with the Russian Ambassador upon the subject of the threatened disturbances in the neighbourhood of Mousb, his Excellency informed me that he had instructed the Russian Consul who is now on his way to Bitlis, *viâ* Tiflis, to concert with His Majesty's Consul at the former place and proceed to Moush in the hope that the presence of the Foreign Consuls at that place might assist in calming any agitation that might be in existence.

I told M. Zinoviow that I was glad to hear that he had taken this action and that

I would instruct Mr. Heathcote to proceed to Moush. I subsequently saw the French Ambassador and suggested to him that a French Consular officer in the neighbourhood should be instructed to go to Moush also. M. Constans promised to consider the matter, and said that he would probably send the Consul from Van or elsewhere to join and concert with the other Consuls at Moush.

I telegraphed to Mr. Heathcote last night the substance of the above and told him that should the Russian Consul on his arrival at Bitlis not proceed to Moush he should communicate with me and ask for further instructions before himself proceeding to that place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 64.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 360. Cypher Despatch.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 12, 1904.*

CONSULAR mediation in Armenia.

I addressed the following cypher telegram to-day to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis:—

"The French Consul at Van has been instructed by the Ambassador here to leave at once for Moush, and to confer with the Russian Consul and yourself as to the chances of mediation proving effective. Please, therefore, proceed there immediately.

"I subjoin, for your information and guidance, an account of procedure at Zeitoun in 1896 on occasion of Consular mediation there.

"The Consuls proceeded with a sufficient escort near the insurgent camp, summoned the Chiefs and informed them of the terms of surrender offered by the Turks. These were accepted, with slight modifications, whereupon the Consular cavasses escorted the leaders to the sea, where the latter embarked for European soil.

"Terms were as follows:—

"Guarantees for preservation of lives of Christians, and disarming of Moslem neighbours; surrender of military weapons; amnesty; remission of some years of land tax, &c."

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 65.

Mr. Spring-Rice to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 249. Secret.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 12, 1904.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 182 of the 30th April, on the subject of the state of affairs in the Van district, I have the honour to report to your Lordship, for what it is worth, the following information which has reached me from a [illegible] source:—

The Sultan proposed to the Russian Government that 20,000 or 30,000 Turkish Armenians, who were anxious to repair to Russian territory, should be allowed to cross the frontier.

The Russian Foreign Office was in favour of granting the Sultan's request, as an economical means of earning His Majesty's gratitude, which in the near future would be a matter of some importance to Russia.

M. de Plehve, however, absolutely refused to consent to the reinforcement of so dangerous an element as the Armenian population of Trans-Caucasia, and the Sultan's request was refused.

I alluded to the subject in the course of conversation with Mr. Hartwig, who told me that the Turkish forces in the Van district had been exaggerated, and that he thought that perhaps too much importance had been attached to the whole question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CECIL SPRING RICE.

No. 66.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 90.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 16, 1904.*

DISTURBANCES in Armenia.

Mr. Heathcote arrived at Moush from Bitlis last night; the French Consul has also arrived there. Considerable excitement prevails.

Refugees, to the number of a thousand, are in great distress and are sheltering in Moush. Their villages are said by the Grand Vizier to have been burnt by the insurgents before the arrival of the troops. The Turkish authorities have remitted pecuniary relief.

No. 67.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 19.)

(No. 92.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 19, 1904.*

DISTURBANCES in Armenia.

My telegram No. 90 of the 16th instant.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush reports failure of mediation of Bishops, and states that Talori and Semal Sheuik, which the insurgents had occupied, have been captured and burnt by troops, who have also destroyed several other villages.

No. 68.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 181.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 20, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 356 of the 11th instant, relative to the threatened disturbances in the neighbourhood of Moush, and the proposed dispatch of the British, French, and Russian Consuls, in order to calm any agitation among the Armenians in that district.

I approve the action taken by you in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 69.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 23.)

(No. 364.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 13, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 305 of the 26th ultimo respecting certain changes in the administration of the Lebanon, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout reporting the appointment by Mouzaffer Pasha of Emir Sami Arslan as Kaïmakam of Shouf, and certain disturbances which have taken place in the Shouf and Batroun districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 69.

Consul-General Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 35.)
Sir, *Beyrout, May 4, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 34 of the 25th April, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that Mouzaffer Pasha announced to me on the following day

his intention to appoint Emir Sami Arslan as Kaïmakam of the Shouf district. My endeavours to persuade his Excellency to exclude all members of the rival families of Djemblat and Arslan, and to name one of the less important Sheikhs, were of no avail, and he appointed that person on the 27th April, notwithstanding the assurances he gave me, as reported in my despatch No. 31 of the 16th April, that this Emir, together with his uncle and cousin, were out of the question, and that he would consult with me before coming to a final decision.

After pointing out these facts to the Governor-General, I made the following observations:—

1. That the sudden return to power of the Arslans would excite bitter feelings among the Djemblats, who had endured ten years of arbitrary misrule under Emir Mustapha during Naoum Pasha's Governorship, and would inevitably lead to serious disturbances in the Druse district, where perfect tranquillity reigned at present.

2. That Article 5 of the Organic Law stipulates the abolition of feudal privileges, and especially of those belonging to the Mokatedji.

3. That the families of Djemblat and Arslan are the rival leaders of the Mokatedji, and therefore the appointment of one of their Chiefs is contrary to the Regulations.

4. That so long as the Kaïmakam is selected from one of these two families the division between the Druses will continue, and the tranquillity of the Shouf will never be assured.

5. By the appointment of a capable officer belonging to an unimportant but respectable family the post would no longer be coveted by these rival Chiefs, and there would be some prospect of effecting a reconciliation.

6. By submitting to pressure from the Palace in such appointments his Excellency was establishing a dangerous precedent, and lowering his personal dignity and prestige as Governor-General. Under the Organic Law he had a free hand in the dismissals and appointments of officials, but the course he was pursuing would ultimately drive all office-seekers to look to Constantinople for assistance, and the comparative independence hitherto enjoyed by the Governor-General in his administration of the province would be destroyed.

I also expressed my surprise that his Excellency should confer any favour on the Emir Sami, who had been the instrument of his uncle in waging a campaign against his Excellency, both locally and at Constantinople, ever since the appointment of Nessib Bey, and that several abortive attempts had been made by these Emirs, as his Excellency was well aware, to stir up a revolt in the Shouf.

In reply, the Governor-General denied that Emir Sami was among the persons he agreed to exclude from the candidature. He admitted that a neutral Kaïmakam would be preferable, but contended that there was no Sheikh answering that description sufficiently qualified for the post. He then proceeded to repeat his former statements that, having only three years longer to serve as Governor, he had to consider his personal interests as well as those of the Lebanon, and he had reasons for knowing that the appointment of an Arslan would please his Chiefs at Constantinople. In proof of this fact, he mentioned that as soon as it became known there that Nessib Bey had resigned an Imperial Iradé* was issued authorizing his son Fuad Bey to remain with him in the Lebanon, a favour which he had hitherto demanded in vain.

His Excellency finally gave me assurances that the appointment of Emir Sami would not affect the Administration, as he intended to retain all existing officials (with whom he was quite satisfied) in their posts, and to issue an order warning them not to resign as is customary among the Druses when a Kaïmakam at the head of a rival party is appointed.

I have little faith, however, in the success of these measures, as the intrigues of the party in power will never cease until the posts are all filled by their friends.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY

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* The Iradé was announced in Beyrout before the resignation of Nessib Bey.

Inclosure 2 in No. 69.

Consul-General Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 36.)

Beirout, May 6, 1904.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 35 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to report that when the appointment of Emir Sami Arslan became known in the mountain many villages of the Shouf were paraded by armed followers of the Emir's, brandishing their weapons and shouting abusive and foul language against the adverse party and their Chief. Guns, with heavy charges of gunpowder, and in some instances loaded with bullets or shot, were fired at the houses and windows belonging to Djemblatis, causing considerable damage to property. These lawless acts were resented in many places by the friends of Nessib Bey, and especially at Mazraat, where a fight took place, resulting in one killed and five wounded, and at Aleih, where thirteen were wounded. Fortunately no other deaths have occurred, although many Druses on both sides have been seriously injured.

The police, who had lost all control over the people, were unable to restore order until reinforcements arrived, either from the gendarmerie or the Turkish dragoons stationed at Beiteddin.

The Governor-General left Beyrout this day for the latter place, and has summoned many Mudirs, Sheikhs, and Notables of the district to meet him there.

These measures may possibly restore order, but I fear they will only be of a temporary nature, and that unless Mouzaffer Pasha adopts the disinterested line of action I had recommended by appointing a Kaimakam who does not belong to the two feudal families of Djemblat and Arslan, the Shouf will continue in a disturbed and dangerous condition.

On Sunday, the 1st May, a large number of Druses and Christians came down to Beyrout to complain of the state of things, and, finding that I was absent, they called on Khalil Pasha, the Vali, who received a deputation of a few persons, and after listening to their grievances recommended them to petition their Governor and return peacefully to the mountain.

I have learnt from a reliable source that the Vali telegraphed the same day to Izzet Pasha, reporting that a peaceful Druse district of the Lebanon had been disturbed by the uncalled-for dismissal of an able and popular Kaimakam, and that he submitted this information only as a warning that the state of things in that part of the Lebanon is most unsatisfactory and might have serious consequences.

I understand also that the Maronite district of Batroun, in North Lebanon, is in a very unsettled state. An affray took place lately in the large village of Bisherreh, near the Cedars, between the inhabitants, in connection with the appointments and dismissals of four Mudirs in the space of a few months, resulting in one killed and twenty wounded, of whom six dangerously. In another village shots were fired during the night at the residence of the Mudir, and everywhere in that district the local authorities and gendarmerie appear to have lost control over the inhabitants.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND-HAY.

No. 70.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 366. Confidential.)

Constantinople, May 16, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting on the concentration of Turkish troops at Moush, and containing observations on the attitude of the Russian Consul at that town.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[Inclosure in No. 70.

Mr. Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 28. Confidential.)

Erzeroum, May 7, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of yesterday. I was informed by a General Officer that twenty-five battalions had been put on a war footing, i.e., 900 men men strong, to be held in readiness to proceed to Moush at the shortest notice. The same officer assured me with the most solemn protestations that the number of battalions at Moush did not exceed nine, but that they each contained 900 men, whence, he supposes, the prevalent mistaken opinion that there are fourteen.

Twenty-five men of the field telegraph service left here yesterday for Moush, and one regiment of cavalry will leave Hassas-Kale shortly for the same destination.

A number of mounted guns, six probably, from the local batteries are destined to "replace" the field guns at Bayezid. I do not know whether these latter will be brought in here or not.

I have little doubt but that Colonel Lonkoff, whose approaching visit I reported, has been to make good the failure of the other two officers who came here lately to "buy horses." The concentration of the troops at Moush has caused great excitement in the Russian circles here, and the Russian Consul-General, whose nerves have been in a very bad condition for some time past, has not hidden the fact from either me or the Turks that he holds my reports to your Excellency and my influence on the local authorities chiefly responsible for the mobilization of the troops. He told me, and, I find, other people too, that it was owing to the British Government that Salih Pasha, a notorious Nishan-hunter (Nishan=Decoration), was appointed to his present command, that he was allowed to correspond direct with the Palace, and to override the advice and opinion of the Mushir and his staff, and to frighten the Sultan into an unnecessary and costly concentration. So bitter has the Consul been on this subject, that I can not help feeling that there is some truth in the old rumour that Tewfik Pasha was in some way in his power, and that he supported, even if he did not suggest, his appointment to Moush to deal with the revolutionaries.

I may say, in parenthesis, that one of the first things Tewfik Pasha gave utterance to on his arrival at Diarbekir was that the British Embassy had prevented his going to Moush, but that the War Office had promised him that, once the business begun, he should take a brigade of Redifs from Diarbekir, and, he added, "when I do I will settle the affairs of those Armenians." I was apparently the first to inform the Russian Consul of the arrival of the former two officers, and it seems to have annoyed him beyond his powers of self-restraint, for he gave vent to the opinion that I had my information direct from the local Government, which told me of their coming, whereas both it and his own had left him in ignorance of the fact.

There is a rumour current here that M. de Seriabine has been recalled owing to his having exaggerated the concentration at Moush to an extent which deterred the Russian Government from drawing off any troops from the Caucasus for the service in the Far East. Whatever the reason for them, two facts are certain, viz., that there was an order for the mobilization of some of that army corps, that that order was cancelled, and that the frontier posts have lately been doubled and trebled, while a regular concentration appears to have begun at Sara-Kamish.

I am told on very good authority that the Turkish Government is doing its utmost to have M. Averianoff, Secretary, so-called, in reality Military Attaché of the Russian Consulate, recalled. Several cases of corruption among Turkish commissioned and non-commissioned officers have lately come to light, and three sergeants sentenced for taking bribes from M. Averianoff, while one or two officers of the garrison and frontier are being closely watched.

Captain Tyrrell reported to your Excellency the efforts made by the Russian Vice-Consul at Van to prevent the Turks and Armenians from talking about the war. M. de Seriabine has made similar efforts here. He first attributed the spreading of false rumours to the British Consulate in such a manner that I felt obliged to deny the fact to him, and then he explained that he did not mean me, but an old Italian, 80 years of age or thereabouts, who, having suffered at the hands of the Russians and the monopolies established on the frontier, took this opportunity of annoying them, which he did with great success. Towards all such as deal with Russia, or who have anything to do with him, M. de Seriabine has been pitiless, threatening them with the closure of the frontier against their goods, with withdrawal from them of his goodwill, &c., if he should hear of their talking about Russian misadventures. Turkish officials and

officers have received the most stringent orders to abstain from discussing the war, and it is quite pitiable to see the Vali's anxiety to be contradicted when he reports the latest inspired rumour of a big Russian success. M. de Scriabine has adopted the system of issuing bulletins of the latest war news, and affixing it to the door of the Consulate in Turkish and Armenian. One of these, giving the news of the destruction of two Japanese cruisers, bore a resplendent gilt edging. These bulletins are strictly *de fide* for all Turks and Armenians.

With it all, and in spite of a dinner, offered at his special request, to the Russian Consul by the Armenian Bishop, the feeling against the Russians shown by both Turks and Armenians is extraordinarily strong and evident. Nor has it been decreased by the opening of the frontier to the Fedai, the Turks naturally understanding that it is done with the object of keeping them busy, the Armenians at least grasping the fact that it is not for their sakes that the Russians are fomenting the revolutionary movement.

I do not think that there is any one who would regret the depart of M. de Scriabine. As a colleague he is intolerable, brusque to rudeness, unwilling to give information or to discuss matters, even with the French Consul, overbearing, and nervous for his own safety. As a Consul he is intensely disliked by the local authorities for the same reasons; he is shortsighted in his view of circumstances, and he is absolutely regardless of any thing which affects the native population unless it affects also Russian relations.

Last year there was trouble in the Passin, his first suggestion to the French Consul was that his (the Russian Consulate) quarter of the town should be barricaded. In any emergency he would be worse than useless, and more than unwilling to act in concert with his colleagues, excepting for his own defence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 71.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 23.)

(No. 267.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 16, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a very interesting despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting upon the recent events in the Moush district.

Your Lordship will perceive from a perusal of this despatch that Mr. Heathcote is of opinion that the main object of the insurgents is to provoke foreign intervention, either by prolonging the present state of political uncertainty, or by provoking the Moslems to a massacre of innocent Armenians. He further expresses a belief that the insurgents will refuse mediation or any terms offered by the foreign Consuls which would not pledge their Governments to a considerable measure of intervention in the administration of the Armenian provinces, unless under stress of urgent military success, and after they have lost all hope of successful action in resisting the Turkish forces.

I spoke to the Grand Vizier on Monday, the 9th instant, in regard to the villages said to have been burnt by the Kurds, to which allusion is made in the latter part of Mr. Heathcote's despatch, and I have now given him a list of the villages. His Highness, on the occasion of my visit, promised that he would cause immediate inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the report.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 71.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 20.)
Sir, *Bitlis, April 30, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 17 of the 23rd April, I have the honour to report that, according to information brought by various travellers from Moush, the Vali summoned the two Bishops of Moush and Bitlis and members of their Councils, and ordered them to proceed to Sasun with a view to opening negotiations with the insurgent

leaders. They replied that no action that they could take would have any effect unless his Excellency himself accompanied them, and it is stated that the insurgents themselves had made it known that they would communicate with no one but the Governor.

Ferid Bey at first insisted that they should obey his orders, fixing Monday, the 25th April, as the latest date for their departure, and it seems that they yielded, though repeating that they had no hope of success.

On Saturday, the 23rd, however, the Governor-General started from Moush for Semal, the first village in the disturbed district, separated from Moush by one mountain ridge, a journey of four hours in summer and perhaps twice as much at this season. He took with him a small escort and a few officials, including some of the judicial officers whom he had brought from Bitlis; the Bishops, with a large body of Armenian ecclesiastical and lay Councillors, village Headmen, and others, to the number of about sixty, were to follow him two days later, together with a force of four battalions, and arrangements were made to connect Semal with Moush by telegraph.

It is asserted that Ferid Bey's attitude towards the Armenians of Moush has been far less conciliatory than that which he had adopted in Bitlis, that he charged their leading men with being in league with the insurgents, furnishing them with money and supplies, and so with being largely responsible for the present state of affairs, and that he demanded from them a written admission that the bands in the mountains were outlaws ("Eshkiya"), and another to the effect that the reports given as to the Honan episode were false.

If this is true his object may have been to lay on them the responsibility of negotiating with the rebels, to allay troubles which he attributed to them, without openly admitting that the Government had need of their mediation, but such language would be likely to act as an encouragement to the more lawless Kurds, and in fact much crime is reported from the plain of Moush.

When he left Bitlis the Vali seemed to have considerable hope that he would before long be able to settle the Sasun question, but his confidence is not shared by many here. Should the insurgents refuse whatever offers he may make, I venture to think that the Government can hardly avoid military action, as the rejection of terms offered on behalf of the Sovereign by an official of his rank would be an act of rebellion so open that it would be impossible to overlook it.

The action of the insurgents will probably be dictated, as I submitted in my despatch No. 13 of the 9th April, by the extent of their confidence in their power to offer effective resistance—at all events for a long enough time to give them some hope of provoking foreign intervention.

In view of these completely altered circumstances and the impossibility of broaching the question with the Vali, I think it my duty to await further instructions from your Excellency before taking any steps to put myself in communication with the insurgent leaders, in accordance with the terms of your despatch of the 17th April, which reached me on the 26th.

Such communication would not be easy at any time in Bitlis, owing to distance and fear of discovery, and to the difficulty of securing reliable intermediaries; and in my humble opinion it would be most unwise at this moment to allow any suggestion of the possibility of action on the part of foreign Governments to reach the revolutionaries.

As far as is known here, their chief hope is that, either by prolonging the present state of political uncertainty, or, if that fails, by provoking the Moslems to massacre innocent Armenians, they may be able, sooner or later, to induce Europe to intervene; and if they had any suspicion that the European Governments were prepared to take action at the present moment they would be likely to refuse immediately the offers made by the Sultan through his officers, in the hope that, if foreign Powers had once taken up the case, they might find themselves compelled to continue their action until some at least of the aims of the insurgents were realized.

I cannot believe that, except under the stress of urgent military necessity, they would accept any terms from foreign Consular Delegates which would not pledge their Governments to a considerable measure of intervention in the administration of the Armenian provinces; and though I admit that my information as to their hopes and plans is meagre, yet, if the beliefs of their co-religionists here and their action in refusing to treat with the Bishops can be taken as tests, it would not appear that they despair of the situation so completely as to be satisfied with the simple promise of a safe-conduct for the leaders and a more or less illusory amnesty for their local supporters.

Since writing the above I have received further news from Moush, conveyed to me secretly, which shows that the Armenians of that town have been greatly alarmed during the last few days by the events occurring, or believed to be occurring, in the mountains. Similar rumours, but in less detail, are current here, and it is generally

supposed that they refer to quite recent events, though I am inclined to think that they are repetitions of the reports mentioned in my despatch No. 19 of the 23rd April.

According to these statements, over 200 Kurds of the Badikanli tribe attacked Gueliguenim and Guelimansour, with a loss of twenty-five men on their side and one insurgent; the two villages are said to have been burnt, as well as Kop, Guermav, Shenik, and part of Semal.

It is also asserted that Kurds from Khian have burnt the following villages in the Talori district: Heguin, Ardgonk, Enguznak, Serret, Mezre, and Hartko, and that there has already been great loss of life, several hundred persons having perished "on both sides." The use of this expression indicates regular fighting, but my informants evidently believe that a massacre of the villagers is in progress.

I am quite unable as yet to judge how much truth there may be in these statements. The Bitlis authorities profess to have no authentic information, but to have received credible rumours of tribal disputes among Kurds near Huzo.

It seems unlikely that the insurgents, who, as I hear, have accepted the idea of a conference provided the Vali came in person, should have chosen this time to attack the Kurds, and the probability is that the latter were the aggressors, as stated by my informants; it is even possible that, as appears to have been the case with the Albanians in Macedonia, they assumed the offensive in order to render any settlement unattainable.

If the attack was in fact made by Kurds, the Vali could, in my humble opinion, do far more to demonstrate the good faith of himself and the Government, and so to promote the cause of peace, by the prompt punishment of the assailants than by any conferences with the rebel leaders, for any such clear proof that the new Governor was prepared to introduce some measure of justice would deprive the insurgents of much of the support which they find among the Armenian population.

If the facts were proved against them, the Kurds would doubtless assert that the villages were in rebellion, and to judge by all the precedents, the authorities would accept this statement without any evidence as complete justification for any outrages.

If the Sultan and his advisers have any desire to restore order in these distracted provinces, no attention whatever should be paid to such an assertion, for even if it were true, the villages would have been in insurrection not against the Badikanli or Khianli Kurds, but against a Government which has recently collected a powerful force of regular troops in the immediate neighbourhood.

With eighteen or twenty battalions surrounding Sasun, and with negotiations actually in progress, it would be nothing less than shameful to the Ottoman Government if it should permit the tribes to take the law into their own hands, and under the pretext of performing police duty, with which they ought to have no concern, to plunder, rape, and kill a population which, if in rebellion, has only been driven into that condition by the incapacity of the Government and the unbridled licence which it has hitherto accorded to the Kurds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 72.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 23.)

(No. 382.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 18, 1904.

SINCE the arrival of Mr. Heathcote at Moush on the 15th instant, the only news I have received from him is that contained in my telegram No. 90 of the 16th instant, with the additional fact that he reported that the Turkish troops were believed to be near Talory.

I received a visit yesterday from Youssouf Bey, who came in the name of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to tell me that a report had reached the Palace to the effect that I proposed to send the British Consul to Talory, and to express the hope of the Sultan that I would not take such a step, as to do so would only serve to encourage the insurgents to resistance and prolong the existing troubles.

I replied that I had no intention for the moment of sending Mr. Heathcote to Talory, but that I could not undertake not to do so should it be shown in the reports which would reach me in due course that outrages were being committed there, or that the inhabitants were suffering from the excesses either of the troops or of the Kurds.

When I saw the Grand Vizier on the 16th instant, I mentioned the report that I had received from Mr. Heathcote of the presence at Moush of about 1,000 refugees, and I asked his Highness what information he possessed on the subject. He replied that it was quite true that there were 1,000 refugees at Moush, and that the Turkish Government had sent them pecuniary assistance amounting to about 60,000 piastres (600*l.*). When I pressed him as to whence the refugees had come, he answered that they had fled from the neighbouring villages which had been destroyed by the insurgents before the arrival of the Turkish troops.

This statement of the Grand Vizier seemed to me highly unsatisfactory, as granted that the insurgent bands who have crossed the frontier are capable of committing the grossest excesses, it is evident that the damage done must have been committed by a larger force than that of some 200 men who are believed to have come either from Russia or Persia. If, again, this force had been increased by local revolutionaries, it is hardly credible that these men would have turned against their own kith and kin, burned their own villages, and forced the women and children to seek the protection of Turkish officials at Moush.

I received yesterday a long message from Mr. Heathcote, but mutilated in such a manner as to make it quite undecypherable. During the troubles of 1895–1896 this was a favourite dodge of the Turks for preventing the diffusion of reliable information, and it would almost seem as if they were again resorting to this device for gaining time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 73.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 30.)

(No. 383.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 22, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith, copy of a despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Maunsell, Military Attaché to the Embassy, reporting an interview he has had with the Minister for War, on the subject of the disturbances in Armenia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 73.

Lieutenant-Colonel Maunsell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 40.)
Sir, *Constantinople, May* 18, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Minister of War gave me to-day the following account of the proceedings of the Turkish troops near Mush.

The recent fighting took place at Ghelliguzan with the insurgents under Antranik, resulting in sixty Armenians being killed, and the rest taking to flight southwards towards Talori.

Owing to the severe winter, the snow is still lying deep round Ghelliguzan, and the troops had great difficulty in reaching the place.

The fight continued up the lofty Antogh Dagh, which towers over Ghelliguzan to the south, but finally the insurgents were dislodged and fled to Talori.

An intimate friend of Antranik was wounded and captured, but the rebel leader himself managed to make good his escape, and, according to certain reports, is believed to be in hiding in the town of Mush.

Two columns of troops were actually employed against the insurgents, one of five battalions, under the command of Ferik Salih Pasha, who attacked Ghelliguzan, and the other of two battalions, with the Mutessarif of Ginj, which moved on Kulp.

There are now seventeen battalions of Nizam Infantry in the whole of the Bitlis Vilayet, *i.e.*, north and south of the Sasun Mountains, with eight battalions of 15th Redif Division also under arms.

The War Minister assured me that no Hamidieh Kurds had taken part in the fighting, that some civil officials had accompanied the troops, and that Salih Pasha had carried out the operations creditably, which is probably true from what I know of his capabilities as a soldier.

He seemed to think that the opposition of the insurgents was crushed out, at least for the present, and there was no need of serious apprehension for the future.

He confirmed Mr. Shipley's report from Erzeroum that the Russians had begun to concentrate troops at Sarikamish, and that reserves had also been called out in the Trans-Caucasus, but he thought the Russians had too much to think of in their war with Japan, and assumed that many of the Trans-Caucasus troops were destined to be sent to the Far East.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL, *Lieutenant-Colonel, Military Attaché.*

No. 74.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 391.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 24, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 367 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to herein summarize the recents events in the Moush district, as reported to me by Mr. Vice-Consul Heathcote since he reached that place.

Upon Mr. Heathcote's arrival at Moush he found that the Vali had overridden the Patriarch's instructions to the Bishops of Bitlis and Moush to send some Superiors of the Sassun Monastery to advise the insurgents to surrender, in order to avoid extermination, by ordering the Prelates to go themselves. This they consented to do after much discussion, and apparently under practical compulsion.

Arrived at a place called Latchkan, the Vali showed the Bishops one corpse and five wounded men, and demanded that they should acknowledge that this was the work of the insurgents.

The Bishops, not being in possession of any facts relating to this incident, refused to make the declaration asked for.

On the 25th April the Vali sent the Superior of Garabet Monastery, a native of Sassun, to convey to the insurgents the advice to surrender, as had been counselled by the Patriarch, but only allowed nine hours within which their reply must be received, —an inadequate space of time.

The Superior found one leader and a few subordinates at Semal, but reports that, whilst he was discussing the situation, troops were seen to be approaching. The insurgents at once sent him away without a reply. The troops then attacked the insurgents, drove them back, and took and burnt the village, a similar fate having befallen Shenik the previous day.

Such is the information Mr. Heathcote gathered from the Bishops who were allowed to return to Moush after a long delay, and after having been treated by the Vali as sympathizers with the insurgents. He adds that they further stated that all the young women had been carried off by the soldiers or Kurds, but that about 1,000 refugees had come in who were at first in danger of starvation, but have now received some rations from the Government.

Mr. Heathcote, in submitting the above account of the Bishops' report of proceedings, says that he has so far had no time to verify their statements, and adds that it is clear that many villages have been destroyed, according to the Armenians by the troops, and to the Turks by the insurgents.

On the 18th instant Mr. Heathcote reported that Talori, whither the routed insurgents had fled, had been taken, with a Turkish loss of twenty-five gendarmes killed and wounded, and that some troops had been sent against the insurgent leader Antranig, who was stated to be in the eastern portion of the plain with a large band. He added on the same occasion that the Bishops said that they had seen more Kurds than soldiers during their expedition to the mountains, and that the priests in those districts confirmed this in their letters, and stated that thirty-seven villages had been destroyed.

On the 20th Mr. Heathcote telegraphed that 200 soldiers had returned from Semal the previous day, and that the officials and others considered that the fighting in the mountains was nearly over; but he reported that refugees still continued to arrive at Moush.

The French Consul reached Moush on the 20th, and stated that he had passed several

burnt villages in the plain. Mr. Heathcote gathered, from his first conversation with him, that he did not think that Consular mediation would be of much avail with the insurgents, since they have no longer anything that they can concede. In reporting this, Mr. Heathcote adds that the Bishops say that the Vali has formed a Commission for the establishment of Sassun Armenians on the plain of Moush.

Mr. Heathcote telegraphed on the 21st that he and his French colleague were agreed in thinking that it would be difficult to open negotiations with the present scattered and disorganized bands, who might not respect each other's promises, and that even if the leaders could be saved, the innocent population would remain at the mercy of the soldiery and Kurds.

He reported the continued non-arrival of the Russian Consul, and yesterday supplemented this with a telegram stating that he learns from Erzeroum that the above-mentioned official is believed to be still at Tiflis. He further reports the return of the Vali to Moush with two more battalions and their plunder.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 75.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 392.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 24, 1904.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 391 of to-day's date, I have the honour to report that, when calling upon the Grand Vizier on Monday, his Highness read to me several telegrams respecting the condition of affairs in Sassun which he had received from the Vali of Bitlis, of which a summary was subsequently made by Mr. Lamb, and is inclosed herewith.

According to these reports, twelve villages have been burnt or destroyed in the Sandjak of Moush, and thirteen in the Sandjak of Ghindj; of these, twelve are purely Armenian, and in the other thirteen the vast majority of the inhabitants are of the same race and creed.

The Grand Vizier asserts that neither Kurds nor Bashi-Bazouks participated in the conflict, and that, except in the case of a few villages strongly occupied by the insurgents, the destruction was caused by the insurgents themselves before retiring on the approach of the Imperial troops.

I told his Highness that I had the greatest difficulty in believing this explanation, as it seemed incredible that the insurgents, who, according to the Turkish reports, were composed for the most part of local Armenians, should turn their hand against their own people, and, on the off chance of implicating the officials of the Imperial Government, destroy the houses and property of their friends.

I had, moreover, heard a gruesome report that the young women and children had been carried off from the villages by the troops, and that only the young and helpless or the aged and feeble inhabitants had taken refuge at Moush or Shenik.

I did not deny that probably his Highness had done much to restrain the Kurds and prevent outrages and acts of barbarism, but he had failed to make an example of some of the Kurds caught red-handed in looting, pillaging, and murdering, and, as I had observed some time ago, until he did so the Kurds would not believe that the Central Government really desired to check their brutal proceedings. If he had hung a few of the Aghas so that all Armenia saw them, there would have been few outrages to complain of. In fact, it seemed to me, I said, that the Government's policy was to drive the Armenians from the mountainous districts of Sassun to the Moush plains, where they would be under the eye of the authorities, but at the mercy of the Kurds. All that I had heard pointed to the execution of this plan, and though, happily, the loss of life may not have been considerable, the ruin, poverty, and misery caused must remain, and reduce these much-tried people to the verge both of starvation and desperation.

His Highness replied that the Government entertained no such designs as I imagined, that the conflict was solely due to the action of the insurgents, and that the Vali was providing shelter and food for the refugees. The insurrection had been suppressed with comparatively little loss of life, and the Vali had already started on his return to Bitlis.

Mr. Heathcote's reports do not enable me as yet to judge with complete accuracy the real course of events, but I have no doubt his presence at Moush and that of the French Consul has had a beneficial effect, and prevented outrages developing into wholesale massacre, which was inevitable had the Kurds broken entirely loose, as was the case in 1894.

Mr. Heathcote has asked me whether he should remain at Moush, adding that his continued presence in enforced inaction was now more likely to produce a bad than a good effect. After consulting my French colleague, and trying to ascertain without success from the Russian Ambassador when he expected his Consul, who has apparently been detained for the last fortnight at Tiflis by the Governor-General of the Caucasus, to arrive at Moush, I decided to instruct him to remain until he was assured that there was no likelihood of a fresh insurrectionary movement and new military action. The French Ambassador is giving similar instructions to his Consul, but it is unfortunate that the Russian Consul has not arrived in time to co-operate with his two colleagues. The Russian Ambassador is unable to explain the delay, but expressed his willingness that the British and French Consuls should count upon his full co-operation in any action they might decide upon with a view to the local situation and critical condition of affairs in the Moush and Sassun districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 75.

Memorandum by Mr. Lamb respecting affairs in Sassun.

ON the 16th instant I handed to the Grand Vizier a Memorandum showing the names of the villages in Sassun and Talori reported by Vice-Consul Heathcote to have been destroyed by the Badékant and Khiouli Kurds, and his Highness then promised your Excellency that he would cause an inquiry to be made.

The results of this inquiry have now been communicated to your Excellency in a series of telegrams in the vernacular received from the Vali of Bitlis between the 18th and 21st instant, of which I submit a summary.

In these telegrams the Vali declares the information furnished by this Embassy to be entirely unfounded. He asserts that the orders repeatedly sent by the Grand Vizier as to restraining the Kurdish tribes, and preventing the population from mixing in matters appertaining solely to the Government, have been strictly followed, and that neither the clans above named nor any other part of the Mussulman population have taken any part in the operations against the Armenian insurgents. On the contrary, all the villages destroyed in Sassun and Talori have been deliberately destroyed by the insurgents themselves, with the insidious design of throwing the odium of these acts of barbarity upon the Turks and attracting attention to the oppression of which they claim to be the victims. He gives the following particulars as to the villages destroyed, on the authority of Reports furnished by the Mutessarif of Moush and Ghindj:—

(*a.*) *In the Sandjak of Moush*—

13 villages, all Armenian, in the district of Gheliguzan, amongst which are named Semal and Shenik.

(*b.*) *In the Sandjak of Ghindj*—

5 wards of Talori. Ellin (? Heguin). *Ardgonk. *Akdjesir. *Ghuzouk (? Enghuzouk). *Sevit (? Serret). *Mezré. *Hartko.	All these 12 purely Armenian villages.

And in addition to these the insurgents burned 20 houses in the Mussulman village of Dapik (previously occupied by Andranik), 4 in Latchkan, 1 in Egheghian

* These are the same villages as reported by Mr. Heathcote to have been burned by the Khiouli.

(or Ineghian—*vide* Memorandum No. 79 of the 20th February), and 18 Mussulman houses in the mixed village of Ghelimansour, making a total of 43 Mussulman houses destroyed.

The Vali declares that his statements are proved, not only by the *procès-verbaux* drawn up by the civil and judicial functionaries who accompanied the expedition—which had been submitted to, and counter-sealed by, the members of the Christian deputation sent in advance to counsel the insurgents to surrender—but also by the documents seized at Gheligazan, by papers found on the persons of insurgents who were killed in fighting with the troops, and by the depositions of the refugees who have come in to Moush and surrendered to the authorities. The former have already been forwarded by post, and the remainder are being translated by Nishan Effendi, Mouadin of the Mutesserif of Moush, and will follow in due course.

One of the telegrams communicated to me gives the following brief information as to the actual operations against the insurgents:—

On Monday, the 3rd (16th) May, the troops advanced simultaneously in four columns from Gheligazan and three columns from Kulp, which is situated at ten hours' distance beyond a lofty mountain range, converging on Talori. Between the Autogh and Kapan Daghs they encountered a band of sixty insurgents, of whom they killed fifty. The insurgents endeavoured to conceal their dead by throwing their corpses and their weapons into the torrent or by burying them. On the following morning, Tuesday, the 4th (17th) May, the troops entered Talori, killing eight more insurgents; and on the 5th (18th) they returned to Gheligazan, leaving only three battalions in Talori.

Some of the insurgents, fleeing before the troops, descended into the plain of Moush, where also they began to attack different villages; but the Vali states that he had made his dispositions for dealing with these.

The women and children from the destroyed villages had mostly come in and claimed the protection of the authorities. On the 3rd (16th) the Vali already estimated the number of these at 1,623, part of whom were at Shenik, under tents, while the rest were at Moush and Kulp.

Bread was being issued to these refugees twice daily, but, as the pecuniary resources of the municipal authorities in Bitlis Vilayet were insufficient, the Vali begs for special arrangements to be sanctioned.

(Signed) H. H. LAMB.

May 23, 1904.

No. 76.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received May* 30.)

(No. 398.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 24, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting a recent encounter between Turkish troops and a band of Armenian revolutionists from Persia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 76.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 16.)
Sir, *Van, May* 7, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency of an encounter which has just occurred with a band of Armenian revolutionists from Persia.

Information was received here on the evening of the 3rd instant of an affray at the village of Lim, about 20 miles east of Van, between the Shemsiki Kurds and a revolutionary band. All available gendarmes and cavalry were collected, and left Van that night and during the following day for the scene of the fight.

As usual, the first reports were much exaggerated, and I will now state what I believe to be the facts, gathered from the officers of gendarmerie who have returned.

When they arrived at Lim the fighting was over. The body of one revolutionist was produced, and those of three of their horses. Two Kurds had been killed, and one was mortally wounded. After some forcible interrogation, the villagers produced the clothes of six revolutionists, twelve rifles (one Martini, the rest Russian), three horses which had been captured, and some bundles of papers, photographs, &c.

The Kurds had tried to hide everything as quickly as possible, and had even skinned the dead horses and taken off their shoes before the troops arrived. It is probable that they have succeeded in keeping back some of the loot, and almost certain that they have not delivered up all the rifles.

The official belief, from the investigations on the spot, is that the band consisted of six men and six horses, and that each horse carried a pack of ten rifles in addition to its rider; that all the six men were killed, and that none can have escaped (except naked and on foot), but that the Kurds managed to hide five of the bodies, in the hope of being able to keep as much as possible by saying that only one man had been killed.

The revolutionist whose body was found is said to have been the leader, and is identified as a Turkish subject formerly resident in Shattakh.

The band evidently intended to enter Van quietly in the usual way, to hide themselves there, and perhaps cross to Sassun eventually. But investigation of their papers should throw more light on the matter, and will perhaps give the names of the men composing this band. I will report next week any fresh facts which may be brought to light.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

No. 77.

Friends of Armenia to Foreign Office.—(Received May 31.)

47, *Victoria Street, Westminster, May* 30, 1904.

Dear Sir,

THE Committee of the "Friends of Armenia" have been caused the greatest anxiety by the recent reports from Armenia, and they would esteem it a great favour if you would kindly furnish them with any information as to the recent disturbances and present condition.

Can relief be administered to the refugees at Moush? Is the city of Bitlis safe? Is the destruction of the Sassoun villages still being carried on?

Hoping for a repetition of your former kindness, believe me, &c.
(Signed) E. CANTLOW, *Secretary.*

No. 78.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 190 A.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 4, 1904.

THE Turkish Ambassador told me to-day that Armenian agitators from Russia and Persia had appeared at Sassun and Talori with the purpose of fomenting disorders. They had succeeded in gathering a few followers, with whose assistance they had pillaged several villages, committed many murders, burnt Mussulman and Armenian houses, and had thus endeavoured to spread terror in those regions.

Musurus Pasha said that the Turkish Government, on learning of this, had lost no time in sending a sufficient number of regular troops to the spot, who had soon restored order and completely dispersed the agitators.

His Excellency added that certain foreign newspapers, misinformed by agents who had an interest in doing so, had published calumnious intelligence attributing all the misdeeds committed to the Kurds, and tending to distort the facts as to the criminal acts of the Armenian revolutionaries, in order that the whole responsibility for them should fall upon the Turkish authorities. But, under the happy auspices of the Sultan, order and tranquillity were now completely assured in those regions. The local authorities were, by His Majesty's orders, providing for the wants of those who had suffered from the aggressive acts and the crimes of the agitators, and were granting an amnesty to those of the inhabitants who, after having allowed themselves to be led away by the revolutionaries, were now making their submission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 79.

Foreign Office to Miss E. Cantlow.

Madam, *Foreign Office, June* 1, 1904.

I HAVE received, and laid before the Marquess of Lansdowne, your letter of the 30th ultimo, asking for information with regard to the recent disturbances in Armenia.

In reply to your inquiry as to the present state of affairs, I am to state that the British and French Consuls have been at Moush since the 15th May, and are daily expecting their Russian colleague, who has been detained on his journey from Constantinople.

It was intended that these officers should, if possible, arrange terms of surrender between the Turkish authorities and the insurgents. It seems probable that in the existing state of affairs it will be difficult for them to enter, at present, into negotiations with the bands which are now apparently scattered and disorganized, but their presence has undoubtedly exercised a beneficial effect, and is likely to do much to restrain any excesses on the part of the troops, and to insure proper restraint of the Kurds.

They have been instructed to remain at Moush until they are assured that there is no likelihood of a fresh insurrectionary movement and of renewed military action.

It seems clear that a certain number of villages which were occupied by the insurgents have been burnt, whether by their own action or that of the troops is a matter of dispute. There appears no ground for apprehending that the town of Bitlis is in any danger.

Sir Nicholas O'Conor has been informed by the Grand Vizier that the Vali of Bitlis has taken measures for providing food and shelter for the refugees at Moush, but great destitution appears to prevail, and your inquiry as to the possibility of administering relief has been referred to his Excellency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 80.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 409.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 30, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 398 of the 24th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a further despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting further details of the recent incursion of Armenian revolutionaries into that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 80.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 19.)

Sir, *Van, May* 14, 1904.

IN continuation of my No. 16 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to report that it is now believed that only one of the six revolutionists mentioned was killed.

The Vali tells me that, in his second report to Constantinople, he has stated that the band consisted of six men; that it was dispersed, but that only one was killed. He admits that he first reported that the band consisted of fifty men, but this was when the news was first brought in to Van, and before the police had been sent out.

The officials say that the five men who escaped went back to Persia, but others say that all five succeeded in getting into Van, with their arms.

On the evening of the 8th instant a telegram was received from Sorai, saying that 170 revolutionists had crossed the border into the district inhabited by the Nilun Kurds.

Cavalry and Zaptiehs went out at once, but could find no trace of them, and there appear to have been no grounds whatever for the telegram.

The Vali thinks that some one wants to make mischief and excite the Kurds, and says that he will try and find out how this telegram originated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

No. 81.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 420.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 1, 1904.*

IN reply to a telegram which I addressed to Mr. Heathcote on the 23rd ultimo, informing him, as I had the honour to report to your Lordship in my despatch No. 392 of the 24th ultimo, that the Sublime Porte had learned that the insurgents were dispersed and tranquillity restored in the Moush district, I received a telegraphic answer on the 26th ultimo, stating that he feared that Armenian Sassun had been annihilated, and that it was in this way that tranquillity had been restored. Mr. Heathcote added that the Vali denied that the number of refugees in Moush amounted to as many as 3,000, but admitted that there might be 2,000. The Vali further denied to His Majesty's Vice-Consul that the Kurds had participated in the repressive measures taken by the Turkish troops, but refused to offer any explanations as to how a body of insurgents, which he himself estimated at 1,200 men, could have left so many widows and orphans. He, moreover, could offer no suggestion to account for what he himself styled the mysterious disappearance of all the males.

On the 27th instant I informed Mr. Heathcote, by telegraph, that the Grand Vizier had stated to me, in the course of the conversation reported to your Lordship in my above-quoted despatch, that an amnesty would be granted to all those insurgents who laid down their arms, and I instructed him to ascertain what steps had been taken by the local authorities to give effect to this measure.

Mr. Heathcote replied, on the following day, that the Vali had informed the Bishops that the insurgents who surrendered would be pardoned if they came in within eight days, but that the men who had already come to Moush were being treated as prisoners, and that it was unlikely that many would trust the Turkish offer. Mr. Heathcote added that neither insurgents nor fugitives would be allowed to return to their homes without special orders from here, since the Vali considers Armenian inhabitants of the mountains as intruders on Kurdish property, and is evidently desirous that they should be constrained to settle in the plain, although he denies that such is his wish, but professes that the refugees are themselves asking to be allowed to do so.

The information in Mr. Heathcote's possession does not, he says, bear out this statement, and he has reason to believe that the mountaineers dread nothing more than to be forced to settle in the plain.

With regard to the above statements, I think it is evident that the male population has fled with the insurgents before the Imperial troops, and taken shelter in the extensive range of hills of the Sassun district.

I am constantly impressing on the Porte the danger of the situation and the lamentable impression that must be created in Europe if the Government tolerates a massacre and persecution of the Armenians, whose livelihood depends upon the preservation of their poor homes in the mountains of Sassun; the Grand Vizier continues to assure me that he is doing all in his power to restore tranquillity and to protect the Christian inhabitants.

The Russian Charge d'Affaires informed me yesterday that his Consul would arrive at Moush immediately.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 82.

Question asked in the House of Commons, June 6, 1904.

Mr. Bryce.—To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he can give the House any information regarding the destruction of villages and slaughter of peasantry which has recently been perpetrated by Turkish troops and Kurds in the Sasun district and elsewhere in the neighbourhood of Bitlis and Van; and what action, if any, His Majesty's Government and other European Powers are taking in the matter, with a view to the stopping of this bloodshed and devastation and the prevention of similar acts in the future.

Answer.

According to the reports received by His Majesty's Government, twelve villages have been burnt or destroyed in the sanjjak of Moush, and thirteen in the sanjjak of Guendj; but it is not clear whether the destruction was caused by the insurgents or by the Turkish troops. There seems reason to hope that the loss of life has been comparatively small.

His Majesty's Ambassador has from the beginning repeatedly represented to the Ottoman Government the gravity of the situation, and has urged upon the Sultan the expediency of endeavouring to negotiate peaceably with the insurgents. The Turkish Government accepted a proposal made by Sir Nicholas O'Conor, that the Consuls of Great Britain, France, and Russia should act as intermediaries, and the French and British Consuls have been at Moush since the middle of last month awaiting the arrival of the Russian Consul, who was delayed at Tiflis. It is difficult for these officers to enter at present into negotiations with the bands which are now scattered and disorganized, but there is no doubt that their presence has exercised a beneficial effect.

They have been instructed to remain at Moush until they are assured that there is no likelihood of a fresh insurrectionary movement and of renewed military action.

No. 83.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 193.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 6, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 392 of the 24th ultimo, reporting a conversation which you had with the Grand Vizier on the subject of the recent disturbances in Armenia.

I approve the language which you held on this occasion to his Highness, and I concur in the instructions which you have sent to Mr. Heathcote, to remain at Moush until he is assured that there is no likelihood of a fresh insurrectionary movement and renewed military action.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 84.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 195.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 7, 1904.*

A GOOD impression would be created if a British officer—a soldier for preference—were allowed by the Turkish Government to accompany the troops engaged in operations at Sassun. We presume that Captain Tyrrell could be spared for a few weeks from Van.

No. 85.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 352.)
My Lord, *Paris, June 10, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose the official report of the statement made yesterday afternoon by M. Delcassé in the Chamber of Deputies in reply to a question addressed to him by M. de Pressensé on the subject of the disturbances in Armenia.*

His Excellency began by reading an extract from a report from the French Ambassador in Constantinople somewhat attenuating the description given by M. de Pressensé of the violence and excesses of which the Turks have been guilty in dealing with the Armenian malcontents. He went on, however, to lay the blame for the present lamentable state of affairs mainly to the account of the Ottoman Government, and stated that the French Ambassador had been instructed to concert with his colleagues in making forcible representations to the Porte, to intimate that the French Consular officers would remain in the disturbed districts so long as the population had ground for apprehension, and to warn the Turkish Government in their own interests, and in view especially of recent events in Macedonia, not to cherish the illusion that they could continue indefinitely to avoid the responsibility incumbent upon them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 86.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 424.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 7, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting that orders to mobilize the Redif have been received in that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 86.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Van, May 6, 1904.*

IN continuation of my No. 13 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to report that orders to mobilize the Redif were again received here on the evening of the 2nd. This time there seems to be no doubt but that the mobilization will take place according to the orders, which are from the Mushir at Erzingan, and are, at present, only to give certain Redif battalions a month's training under arms at their respective centres. These orders would not seem to imply a general mobilization, nor a concentration of the 15th Redif Division at its centre, Diarbekir.

Of the 30th (Van) Brigade, only the 1st, 2nd, and 4th Battalions of the 59th (Van) Regiment are being called out. These will undergo their training at their respective centres—Van, Bashkala, and Melasgird. It is apparently not considered worth while to call out the 3rd (Gevver) Battalion, as it exists mostly on paper only. Of the 60th (Bitlis) Regiment, only the 1st and 2nd (Bitlis and Genj) Battalions are called out. That is, only five battalions out of the eight constituting this brigade.

Though the Vali, on whom will fall the task of finding the money for the expenses of this training, regrets the Mushir's decision, he recognizes that the military authorities are within their rights in calling up the reserves for training. As a matter of fact, the Redif should receive three months' training every three years; so, on the face of it, there is nothing unreasonable or ominous in the present orders. Yet it happens that the mere fact of training the reserves at all is unusual.

I believe there is no ground for statements that orders have come from Constantinople to mobilize the whole of the 15th Redif Division and concentrate it at Diarbekir.

I have informed your Excellency to-day, by telegram, of the substance of the above. Seventy mule-loads of ammunition were dispatched from here on the 3rd instant; their destination is Mush.

I am informed that the "Nishanji" battalion of the 19th Nizam Division is under orders for Mush, and I believe that the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Regiment, which was stationed at Akhlat, has also gone to Mush. These should therefore be added to the forces which I have reported from time to time to the Military Attaché as being at Mush or in its neighbourhood.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

* Not printed

No. 87.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 428. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 6, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 420 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to report that I communicated to the Grand Vizier to-day the substance of Mr. Heathcote's despatch, a copy of which is inclosed herewith, on recent events in the Sasun district of Armenia.

His Highness asserted again in the most positive manner that the Kurds had been prevented from approaching the seat of the disturbances, or in taking part in the military operations of the troops; that the local authorities did not give the order to advance against the rebels until assured that they had declined the mediation of the Delegates sent by the Bishops; that the accounts given by the priests, who were known to be favourable to the insurgents, was unreliable; and that a large military force had purposely been sent against the insurgents as the best means of preventing excesses or unnecessary effusion of blood.

His Highness reckoned the number of insurgents who had crossed the frontier at about 600, and proofs of an extensive conspiracy aiming at the overthrow of the Government had been found.

Further information which had lately come to hand showed that meetings had been held in Kars and other places within the Russian frontier, in which the plans of the conspirators were openly discussed, and all arrangements made for a general insurrection.

He hardly expected me to give implicit credence to his report of what had taken place, but he would immediately instruct the Vali to let the British and French Consuls, and also the Russian Consul, if he were at Moush, see the full reports of the Commission that had recorded the events of the last few days, and taken down the evidence given by the Armenians themselves.

I said that, although my present information was too incomplete to form a definite opinion upon the real course of events, there was no doubt that at least twenty-five Armenian villages had been destroyed and burnt, that some 2,000 destitute and homeless Armenian refugees were in Moush alone, and some hundreds in other places; that among them there were neither young women or able-bodied men, that we were ignorant of the lot of both, and that the best we could hope for was that they had retired to the mountains before the troops, but that there was a gruesome report that the former had been carried off by the soldiers.

It was essential, however, that an immediate stop should be put to the burning and pillaging of the homes of these poor defenceless inhabitants, who only asked for peace and security for their lives and property, and such forbearance as would make their existence possible.

It was generally believed that the Government wished to drive the Armenians from the mountains of Sasun into the plains. Such a policy could only be carried out by the extermination of the Armenians, who would be the constant prey and victims of the Kurds who took their place in the mountains.

If the scheme had been ever entertained, it must be abandoned; and if the Imperial

Government were not to be held responsible for all the crime and sufferings that would follow, they must take effective measures to prevent a sinister policy of this sort being carried out.

It was impossible to hold the Government free of blame for recent events, and if further outrages followed after the Government's official statement that the insurrection was suppressed, the responsibility would be grave indeed.

I did not, I added, wish to deny that the orders sent by the Grand Vizier and the precautions taken have resulted in a mitigation of outrage and the prevention of massacre of an extensive character, but it was necessary to make an example of any Kurd found in the act of committing an outrage upon an Armenian, and to hold the authorities responsible for their misdeeds.

His Highness replied that he had done all that lay in his power, and that, at my request, he had for the last twelve months sent telegram after telegram to the local authorities warning them against the effusion of blood and the interference of the Kurds or Bashi Bazouks, but that they had been in face of a serious insurrectionary outbreak planned and plotted on foreign soil, and carried out by several hundred insurgents such as Andranik and others. He did not think that he could, under the circumstances, have done more, and he begged me not to draw conclusions from the incomplete report of Mr. Heathcote, but to wait until he had verified his facts and seen the reports which the Vali would show him.

His Highness added that numbers of the insurgents were laying down their arms every day, and that an amnesty had been granted to all who did so, and provision made for the destitute who had fled to Moush and other places.

At the request of the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, who had called upon me in the morning to let me know that he had been instructed to confer with me and the French Ambassador with a view to draw His Highness' serious attention to events in Sasun, to express his deep regret at the outrages committed, and to ask that a stop should at once be put to a condition of things which was exposing the lives of so many innocent inhabitants.

I said that M. Swetchin had further informed me that he proposed to call upon his Highness to-morrow to carry out his instructions and to support the representations which I had just made. I had no doubt whatsoever that the French Ambassador would speak in the same sense on his return from Smyrna.

I added that the three Governments were in full agreement as to employing all their weight and authority to stop the progress of devastation and ruin in those parts, and that I trusted his Highness would see to it that no time would be lost in warning the local authorities of the danger they would incur by any fresh action justifying serious complaints from the three Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 87.

Mr. Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 22. Confidential.)

Moush, May 22, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, in accordance with your Excellency's instructions, I left Bitlis on Saturday, the 14th instant, and arrived at Moush the next afternoon. While traversing the plain I obtained the impression that the news of the Turkish successes in Sasun had restored a certain measure of confidence, but that there had been great fear in the Armenian villages during the first few days of hostilities, when it was reported that the insurgents had repulsed the troops, and the possibility existed that the Kurds might desire reprisals. The same may be said also of the town of Moush, which is reasonably tranquil at present, though the Armenians open their shops as little as possible.

On the evening of my arrival I received from the Vicar Bishops of Moush and Bitlis a pressing request that I would call on them as soon as possible, and I was given to understand that they had urgent news to communicate to me, and that as they had been under close surveillance until a day or two earlier, the same measure might be taken again before we could have an opportunity of meeting. In consequence, I went at once to the

Bishops' house, and had a long conversation with them, in which they gave me a full description of the proceedings in which they had taken part, as seen from their point of view.

The following are the principal points of the Bishops' narrative, and though the story was somewhat confused and may require modification when fuller information is forthcoming, it may be as well to submit them now to your Excellency:—

In connection with the Honan episode of the 5th February, the Bishop of Moush addressed two telegrams to Constantinople, one to the Patriarchate, which was not transmitted, and one to the Sultan, on receipt of which orders were at once sent from the Ministry of Justice for his arrest. This was effected on the 5th April, but he and his Councillors were released on the 9th. The Vali arrived here on the 18th, and the Bishop of Bitlis on the 22nd. The Vali immediately summoned the two Bishops, and ordered them to proceed without delay to Sasun to advise the insurgent leaders, in the name of the Patriarch, to make their submission, and so avert the necessity of a military attack. The Prelates, however, had only been instructed by the Patriarch to communicate this advice through the medium of some of the Sasun Abbots who are natives of the district. They therefore declined to go, but in consequence of a telegram from the Patriarch to "give all possible assistance" to the Vali, and of his insistence, which amounted to compulsion, they at last yielded, and the next day, Saturday, the 23rd April, they started in company with the Vali, a small escort, and numerous Ottoman officials and Armenian Councillors.

That evening at Lachkan, a Kurdish village at the foot of the mountains three or four hours west of Moush, the Vali summoned them, showed them the mutilated body of a dead Kurd and five wounded men, and demanded from them a declaration that the crimes had been committed by insurgents; he also called on them to declare that the insurgents are brigands (Eshkiya). They refused both these demands, the former because they had no knowledge of the circumstances, and the latter because "brigand" is not a correct description of the insurgents. This was the first of a long series of such disputes, the Governor constantly calling on them for declarations which they felt themselves unable to give. They were treated throughout as persons under suspicion, likely to sympathize with the rebels.

The next day the Abbot of Surp Garabet, a native of Sasun, who had been summoned from his monastery north-west of the plain, was sent on to interview the insurgent Chiefs and give them the Patriarch's advice. Nine hours, a time hardly sufficient for the journey alone, were allowed him in which to return with the reply. When he was gone, the rest of the party, now reinforced by more soldiers, advanced over the Surp Ohannes Pass to Shenik, which they found in ruins, still smoking, having been burnt one or two days previously.

At Shenik they were rejoined by the Abbot, who had been absent some fifteen or twenty hours. The drift of his story, which he was compelled to give in Turkish, though but ill-acquainted with that language, was that at Semal he had found Armenag and some of the minor Chiefs of the insurgents, and had delivered his messages, showing the Patriarch's letter. A discussion arose as to whether any answer should be given, and there was some inclination to consult Vahan, another Chief, at Gueliguzan, but before any decision was arrived at, a body of soldiers was seen advancing. Armenag thereupon refused all negotiations, and sent the Abbot away without any answer.

The next thing that the Bishops saw was the smoke of the burning village of Semal, accompanied by much firing of rifles and cannon, and it is understood that Armenag was killed.

The Vali and all his party then moved on to Semal and camped round the ruins of the village for a few days. The Bishops asked leave to return as all hope of useful mediation on their part was now at an end, but Ferid Bey refused them angrily, saying that all they wanted was to go away and give false reports to the foreign Consuls. Some days later, however, he suddenly ordered them back to Moush, and they were glad to start over the roughest of mountain roads at night, in order to escape from his constant demands for declarations that they as constantly felt bound to refuse.

On their arrival here they dispatched telegrams to the Patriarchate, the Bishop of Bitlis asking for leave of absence, and the Bishop of Moush tendering his final resignation. In view of the Governor's treatment of them, they felt that they would both be exposed to great danger if they retained their offices, and they most earnestly begged me to explain to your Excellency the difficulty of their situation, hoping that, with your support, their applications might be granted.

The Bishop of Bitlis has been ordered by the Vali to remain here for the present, but does not know the reasons for this decision.

Since the Bishop's return, women and children have reached Moush to the number of over 1,000;* they have been crowded together by the authorities in sheds and stables, and for a few days had been in danger of starvation; but in the last day or two a ration of dry bread had been served out, sufficient at least to maintain life. It was noticed that all the women were old and ugly, and they themselves reported that the younger women and girls had all been carried off by Kurds and soldiers.

Your Excellency will understand that the whole of the foregoing is the narrative of the Bishops, and that I am not yet in a position to judge how far it may be in accordance with the facts.

They appeared to regard the proposal to negotiate as a mere ruse by which some of the leaders might be entrapped. It is, of course, possible that the Vali, having no faith in the efficacy of negotiations, may have determined to take just sufficient steps in that direction to enable him to report that he had obeyed his Sovereign's orders, and that the attack had been forced on him by the insurgents' refusal to treat; but if the Bishops' story be true, he would seem to have rendered all negotiation impossible by the haste with which the troops were advanced.

It is known here that Gueliguzan has since been captured after prolonged fighting, with a great quantity of supplies, ammunition, papers, and money; and it is rumoured that Talori has already been attacked and taken. The Mutessarif believes that this is the case, and that if so, all organized resistance will shortly be at an end, and that the insurgents will be prepared to surrender. Armenians think that they will more probably retire to some mountain stronghold, which the troops will have difficulty in capturing.

A great number of villages have been destroyed, and, as is to be expected, the authorities attribute this to the insurgents, while the Armenians are convinced that it is the work of the soldiers and Kurds; and though I was told in Bitlis by Armenians that the rebels had burnt some villages, yet I fear that if the truth can be known the troops will be found to have committed great excesses, and I have little doubt that Kurds have been operating with the troops, though I have as yet no positive information on the subject. The Bishops, however, assert that even in the neighbourhood of the Vali they saw more Kurds than soldiers, and village priests of the mountain write of large bodies of the tribesmen.

From recent reports it would seem that the resistance at Gueliguzan was not very serious, and I have as yet heard no explanation of the reasons which may have led to this important centre being left comparatively undefended.

In the last few days rumours have reached Moush of fighting in the plain, but I have so far been unable to ascertain the details. According to official accounts, which are not denied by Armenians so far as I know, certain insurgents who had escaped from the mountains fell on one or two parties of gendarmes at fords of the Kara Su, killing and wounding some twenty-five men. A small body of troops were sent eastwards, but I have not heard of the dispatch of any more. It is rumoured that Antranig himself is at the head of these bands, and as he is understood to be the fighting chief of the insurgents it is to be feared that further conflicts may now arise in the plain. Armenag having been killed no important leader is known to remain in the mountains except Vahan, who is regarded as an organizer rather than a fighter.

The plain of Moush is so totally open and level that no effective resistance can be offered to the operations of regular troops. I fear, however, that if the insurgents' object is to provoke excesses, they may have succeeded; for I hear reports of the destruction of many villages, accompanied by the usual cruelties. If the scene of disturbance is likely to be moved to the eastwards I should be in some anxiety about the maintenance of order in Bitlis. The Government of that town has been entrusted during the absence of the Vali to the Cadi, who, though animated by good intentions, lacks, as I fear, the energy which is absolutely necessary for the control of the fanatical Kurds of the place.

The command of the few troops left there is in better hands, for, as I have reported to your Excellency, Lieutenant-Colonel Said Bey is a capable officer.

The belief referred to above, that most of the fighting in Susun is over, is confirmed by the return on the 19th of 200 men from Semal.

On the 20th I received a message from the Bishops to the effect that the Vali had formed a Commission for the purpose of transferring the Armenians of Susun to the plain, and settling them on land from which the former owners have fled. I do not at present know what truth there may be in this statement, but doubtless the idea, which, as I understand, was mooted in 1895, will be taken into consideration again this year.

* Now nearly 2,000.

The transfer would be regarded by all Armenians as a calamity, and would necessarily entail great suffering and loss to the individuals affected, but if it offered any hope that a recrudescence of insurrection in Sasun could be permanently averted, it would be an open question whether the gain to the Armenians as a community might not outweigh the disadvantages. I would, however, respectfully submit that so drastic a measure ought not to be taken without the fullest consideration whether the establishment of sufficient regular military posts will not guarantee the maintenance of tranquillity, and that even if this policy should be deliberately adopted, it should not be executed with excessive haste.

There can be no doubt that large numbers of men have fled from their homes in the last few days to escape from the brutalities of gendarmes and soldiers sent on the seizure of a village by insurgents or on the suspicion that they were harboured in it.

If these men, most of whom are innocent of rebellion, are to be deprived even of such ruins as the soldiers have left of their homes, they will have no alternative but to take the place in the mountains of their former inhabitants, and the Sasun question, far from being settled, will only have entered on a new stage.

This is, perhaps, not the time for discussing the condition of the Armenian peasantry in these parts, but I am convinced that as long as the present infamous misgovernment of the plain continues, there will always be recruits found for the bands in the mountains, and that the only chance of permanent peace is to be found in the very slight measure of amelioration which, as I have already had the honour to submit, would, for the present at least, satisfy the inhabitants, who having never known good government, would be content if they could have but some security for their lives and the fruits of their labour.

From my short acquaintance with Ferid Bey I had hoped that he was really determined to introduce at least the absolutely necessary minimum of improvement; but if, as all reports tend to show, he has not even tried to restrain the Kurds during the late operations, there will be little more to expect from him as an administrator than from his predecessors.

The French Consul from Van arrived here on the 20th instant; we have not yet had an opportunity for a full discussion of the situation, and in the absence of the Russian Consul, of whom we have no information whatever, I presume that we are not empowered to raise the question of mediation; but from the conversation we have had, I think that he shares my opinion that the events of this year have offered no occasion for any such mediation as was effected at Zeitun, the insurgents having been repulsed from the beginning of hostilities, and not having been in a position to surrender an important stronghold, or to make any such concessions as must be the basis of effective negotiation.

It appears to us, too, that it would be difficult in the present scattered and disorganized state of the insurgent bands to enter into communication with them, or to have any assurance that promises made by one leader would bind another.

M. Robin also agrees with me in thinking that even if our mediation were successful in saving some of the leaders who have caused the late troubles, we could do little or nothing for the protection of the innocent inhabitants, who must necessarily remain at the mercy of the Government, the gendarmerie, the troops, and the Kurds.

With regard to the Zeitun precedent, I would venture to submit that the disarmament of the Moslem inhabitants of this country is totally impossible, and that the alternative, a general permission to bear arms, is in practice at least equally unattainable.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 88.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 433.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June 7, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 191, of the 2nd instant, forwarding copy of a letter from the Committee of the "Friends of Armenia," asking for information as to the state of affairs in Armenia, and as to whether there would be any possibility of administering relief to the refugees in Moush.

As to this latter point I had already addressed an inquiry to His Majesty's Vice-Consul on the spot, with a view to ascertaining how great is the distress and how far it could be alleviated by pecuniary assistance. Mr. Heathcote informed me, in answer, that the chief complaint of the refugees was that the bread supplied by the Turkish authorities was bad, but that he did not hear any reports of the distress being such as to amount to

starvation. He, at the same time, added that relief, in the shape of better bread, would only cause a cessation of the Government distribution, whilst foreign relief would arouse official opposition, and that if money was sent it would probably be stolen.

I have at the same time no doubt that a satisfactory arrangement can easily be made by Mr. Heathcote for the distribution of relief to the refugees, such as would enable them to establish themselves in their new homes, so that they should not be a burden on the people of the villages in which they will be settled.

As to the inquiry on the part of the Committee of the "Friends of Armenia" respecting the safety of Bitlis, I have the honour to state that, having learnt from Mr. Heathcote that considerable anxiety prevailed there as to the public security for some days, from about the 15th to the 20th ultimo, I immediately called the attention of the Grand Vizier to this report. His Highness assured me that instructions should be at once sent to take every possible precaution. Since then, I am glad to say that I hear that there is no longer any public anxiety.

As regards Sassoon, your Lordship is aware of the representations I have already made to the Grand Vizier, insisting that a stop should be put at once to the attempts to drive the Armenians from the villages they inhabit in the mountains into the plains, and I have reason to expect that no further steps will be taken in this direction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 89.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 138.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 8, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting-Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the concentration of Armenian revolutionaries on the frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 89.

Acting-Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 51.)
Sir, *Erzeroûm, May 31, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that very large bands of revolutionaries are said to be concentrated all along the frontier. Without attaching too much credence to the local estimate, viz., 1,500, it is certain that they are in considerable numbers, and the Russians forming the frontier posts profess themselves unable to cope with them.

Major-General Ahmed Pasha, Commandant of the frontier, left the town suddenly on Sunday for Hassan-Kaleh.

An American, lately come from Bitlis, reported suffering and unrest among the population of the Mutessariflik of Khinis, caused by the troops, who are, I am informed, a turbulent and undisciplined lot. I have several times called the attention of the military authorities to the necessity of making proper provision for the soldiers quartered in the villages, but I do not think that anything has been done in that direction.

Now that the fine season is beginning, there is, I should think, no reason why the troops should not be put under tents, which would, at all events, insure to the women a measure of that privacy which they lack completely in some houses under the present circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 90.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 439.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 8, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 428 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a Dragomanate Memorandum from Mr. Lamb, First Dragoman at His Majesty's Embassy, reporting the seizure of insurgents and arms at Sronk, in the Plain of Moush.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 90.

Memorandum by Mr. Lamb.

(No. 196.)

THE Vali of Bitlis telegraphed from Moush on the 21st May (3rd June) that the Ala Beg, Izzet Bey, whom he had dispatched with a force of gendarmerie to search for Andranik in the villages of the Moush Plain, had found in the Armenian village of Sronk six villagers who had returned from Sassoun after the dispersal of the insurgents. In their houses were found ten rifles, some of which were Russian Mausers, three revolvers, a number of the large bandoliers used by the insurgents, rifle cartridges and loose bullets, 32 okes of smokeless powder, and other articles, which they declared, under cross-examination, to have been purchased from certain Mussulman villagers whom they had indicated. The Vali adds that he instituted a prosecution against the latter, and inquires whether he is to treat the six Armenians as insurgents who have surrendered and claimed amnesty.

A further telegram, dated on the following day, relates that a certain Mirat had been discovered in hiding at Sronk and brought to Moush. This individual stated that he had been one of the leaders of the insurrection. Their plan had been to organize a general rising throughout the Plain of Moush on the day of the fight at Gholiguzan, but the plan had failed. He himself had been deluded by other revolutionary agents, but now saw the error he had committed and threw himself on the Imperial clemency.

The information given by this man led to the discovery of 1 Mauser, 7 Martinis, and 10 other breech-loaders, 7 flintlocks, 174 cartridges, 2 hand-jars, 1 sword, a quantity of powder and bullets, and three cans full of dynamite, all of which the Armenians declared that they had purchased from Mussulman villagers whose names they gave. The dynamite was sent to the Artillery Staff at Moush for analysis, with a view to establishing its origin, but the Artillery having reported that such analysis was impossible, and the stuff itself dangerous, it was decided to destroy it, after a Mixed Commission had drawn up a *procès-verbal* containing an exact description of the shape and appearance of the recipients, which would be handed to the judicial authorities.

June 7, 1904.

No. 91.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 210 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 15, 1904.*

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me to-day, and made a statement to the following effect:—

The statements made by the Grand Vizier to Sir Nicholas O'Conor with regard to recent incidents in certain villages of Anatolia have been incompletely reported by the correspondent of Reuter's agency at Constantinople. His Highness laid special stress on the fact that it was the Armenian bands who attacked and burned the villages with a view of inducing the peaceful inhabitants to join them. The evidence which had since been collected established this fact beyond all question. The Imperial Government had made every sacrifice in order to put an end to these acts of brigandage

and to re-establish order. They were showing the greatest generosity towards the Armenians who had submitted, and were granting them assistance of every kind.

Thanks to the measures taken, order and tranquility had been restored.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 92.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 107.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 19, 1904.

REFERRING to my despatch No. 459 of the 11th instant, on the subject of the Armenian disturbances.

Following telegram, dated yesterday, received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush :—

"Nothing serious to report last four days. Vali's attitude and policy seem to have been changed by some instructions which he has received from Constantinople, and which have evidently been issued in consequence of pressure from His Majesty's Embassy. He no longer denies everything, and pays attention to representations."

The Grand Vizier has agreed to tell the Vali that he will be held personally responsible for further outrages, also he has agreed to provide funds for rebuilding the houses of the Armenians in Sasun. The British, French, and Russian Consuls at Moush are acting together, and I am in close communication with my French and Russian colleagues here. His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van is expected to reach Moush to-day.

I was anxious he should visit the Sasun district and Gheliguzan, in order to report on the recent occurrences, but having considered it well to inform the Turkish Government that I should hold them responsible for his safety, and as it is certain that they will insist on providing him with a large escort, by which means effective inquiry will be prevented, I have sent him instructions to try to attach himself to any military force which may be operating in the field, and not to proceed into the mountainous districts without previously consulting the other Consuls at Moush and assuring himself of his safety.

(Confidential.)

I am of opinion that the Armenians are quite capable of attacking him, in the hope of securing foreign intervention, so that prudence is necessary.

No. 93.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 20.)

(No. 451.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 13, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting serious conflicts between Druses and Bedouins.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 93.

Consul Richards to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 25.)
Sir, *Damascus, May* 28, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that on two occasions during the past month there have been serious encounters between the Druses of the Hauran and the Bedouin tribe, known as Esh-Shemal, in the first of which the Druses, after a fierce engagement, gained a complete victory over the Arabs, killing 13 of their Sheikhs and 47 of the

rank and file; after which they carried off from their vanquished foes 1,000 sheep and 15 mares. They are reported to have lost only one man.

The second conflict, which occurred only ten days ago, resulted in little or no bloodshed, but the Druses, who appear to have been again victorious, carried off from the Bedouins 400 camels and some 16 tents.

Seeing that these Druses were the victims of a marauding expedition, organized and carried out in the Ma'an district by these self-same Arabs more than three months ago, when they were robbed of some 12,000 sheep and several hundreds of camels (as reported to your Excellency at the time), and inasmuch as the Administrative authorities acknowledged their inability at the time to obtain redress for them, or the restitution of the plundered property, I do not see that they are very much to blame. The heavy bloodshed which took place in the first conflict is much to be regretted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 94.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 20.)

(No. 456.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 13, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting-Consul at Erzeroum, reporting an attempt by two Armenians to provoke disorders at Erzeroum, and the Vali's promptitude in preventing an outbreak.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Acting-Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 36.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, June* 4, 1904.

I HAVE had so often to reflect adversely on the conduct of public affairs by the Vali that it is with great pleasure that I bring to your Excellency's notice the following case, in which his Excellency acted with praiseworthy promptitude and good sense :—

Two days before the Prophet's birthday, *i.e.*, on Friday, the 27th ultimo, a rumour spread about the bazaar that some Armenians of the town had grossly insulted Mohammed's memory. The Vali heard of the matter, and his inquiries elicited the fact that two shoemakers had stamped the soles of several pairs of boots with a seal bearing the words "Ya Muhammed," and had sold them to Moslems, thus causing them to tread on the name of their Prophet.

The Vali had them arrested at once, sent out a great number of plain-clothes police to stop the discussion of the affair in the streets, and took every means of preventing popular excitement from coming to a head and breaking out. He claims, and I have absolutely no reason for not believing, that the two Armenian shoemakers acted, probably under orders from the Committees, with the object of provoking disorders, and that he crushed at its birth what might have developed into very serious trouble.

His Excellency asked for permission from Constantinople to send the two men—who did not deny the use of the stamp, but said they could not read Turkish, and had used it in ignorance—to some other vilayet for trial. He was instructed to send them to Mosul, and they started a week ago by night.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 95.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received June 20.*)

(No. 459.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, June 14, 1904.

I COMMUNICATED to the Grand Vizier yesterday the substance of the inclosed despatch from Mr. Heathcote, dated the 29th May, and told him that there seemed to be no doubt that, notwithstanding his repeated promises and assurances, the Kurds had taken an active part in the destruction of the life and property of the unfortunate Armenians inhabiting the mountainous districts of Sasun and other places.

His Excellency contended that the loss of life was due to the inhabitants taking up arms with the insurgents who had come from abroad, that all his information showed that these insurgents had planned for the last twelve months a widespread conspiracy which was to have broken out simultaneously in various districts, and that although there had unfortunately been considerable effusion of blood, it would have been much greater had it not been for the large force of regular troops sent to quell the insurrection, and the measures taken by the Central Government in attaching to the army the Procureur-General and other civil officials with a view to prevent excesses.

I told his Highness that I had always mistrusted the assurances I had received about the Kurds, but that whether he himself was deceived by the reports of the Vali or not it seemed improbable that such ruin and devastation should have been inflicted on the inhabitants had those barbarous hordes been kept at a distance from the seat of military operations.

We were still without precise information to enable a correct estimate to be made of the excesses committed, but I had heard rumours of extensive massacres, and the report of Mr. Heathcote seemed to credit these stories. The truth would be known before long, and if these accounts proved to be true, a terrible responsibility would fall, and justly fall, upon his Highness and the Imperial Government. The Grand Vizier replied that if crimes had been committed the Imperial Government would not attempt to shield the perpetrators, and punishment of the severest order would be inflicted upon the guilty.

I said that these assurances were vague and unsatisfactory in face of the demand I had often made that any Kurds caught in the act of massacring or plundering the Armenians should immediately meet with capital punishment. There was no other way of persuading these lawless and cruel tribesmen to believe that the Imperial Government disapproved of their acts, and would hold them responsible with their lives.

All the information we had received went to prove the design of hunting the Armenians from the mountains, and that the cynical language of the Vali, in which he questioned their right of ownership of their poor mountain hamlets, showed his intention of driving them into the plains. His Highness must give a proof of his reprobating such policy, and he could do this by sending orders to the Vali to allow all the refugees who desired to return to their homes to do so at once, and to afford them protection and security against the attacks of the Kurds. Very probably their houses and lands were already occupied by the latter, so that nothing short of the most energetic action on the part of the Government would enable them to return.

His Highness willingly agreed to send instructions to the Vali of Bitlis in this sense, adding that if any of the refugees preferred to remain in the plains of Moush they should be equally protected.

I saw this telegram dispatched before I left the Sublime Porte, and in the evening I advised Mr. Heathcote accordingly.

His Highness subsequently read to me a telegram which he had received two days ago from Bitlis, a translation of which I have the honour to inclose herewith. Its tenour is very different from that of Mr. Heathcote's despatch, and its statements inspire me with little confidence; however, it is gratifying to be able to report that the anxiety felt a short time ago as to the security of the Armenians in Bitlis has subsided, and that neither there nor in the plains of Moush have any outrages been reported.

I have the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship a paraphrase of a telegram which I received from Mr. Heathcote last night, as also of my reply.

I have not thought it advisable to authorize Mr. Heathcote to leave Moush as, although the past cannot be repaired, I consider his presence and that of his colleagues highly desirable for the present.

I informed the Grand Vizier yesterday that, under instructions from your Lordship, I had requested Captain Tyrrell, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, to proceed at once to the seat of military operations, whether at Sasun or elsewhere.

His Highness made no objection, and said that orders would be given immediately to the Valis to afford him an escort and all facilities, although he travelled outside the radius of his proper Consular district.

I have just received a telegram from Captain Tyrrell stating that he will start at once for Gheliguzan, and will be in Moush at the end of the week.

It is impossible to acquit the Ottoman Government of blame for the lamentable occurrences which have marked the suppression of revolution during the last six weeks, but still I consider that some credit must be given to the Grand Vizier for precautionary measures which have at least put a limit to the excesses which otherwise would have certainly followed the outbreak of what at one time was intended to be an extensive and serious revolutionary movement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 95.

Mr. Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 23.)
Sir,

Moush, May 29, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 22 of the 22nd May, I have the honour to report that the Vali of Bitlis returned here from Sasun on the 23rd instant, accompanied by two battalions and 1,000 more women and children, making 3,000 refugees in all.

The next day the French Consul and I called on him, and his attitude left us both with the impression that there had been little exaggeration in the Armenian accounts of recent occurrences.

To the suggestion that perhaps the Kurds had committed some excesses, he replied with an effrontery that surprised us, even in a Turkish official, that no Kurds had taken part in the proceedings, and that there had been no excesses whatever except those committed by the insurgents.

He maintained his previous estimate of 200 rebels, come from other provinces or from abroad, and 1,000 natives of Sasun who had joined them; and when we asked how this small body could leave so many widows and orphans, and what had become of all the males of Sasun, he could only say, with some apparent embarrassment, that it was curious how the men had disappeared.

He practically admitted that there was no one left in the villages of the mountain, and, as a matter of fact, I imagine that the majority are in hiding among the rocks, while a large number have been killed and others are concealed in villages of the plain.

The few men who are found are at once imprisoned as insurgents, in spite of the Vali's promises to M. Robin, and only the women and children are admitted to the status of innocent victims of the late troubles; and even they receive but little consideration. The bread supplied to them is scanty in quantity and of infamous quality, and no medical help at all is given to those among them who are wounded, while they are exposed to much ill-treatment by their guards.

They are now to be removed from Moush to a neighbouring village, where they are to be guarded by a few gendarmes only. This may be better for them, and it is probably in the interest of public health that they should not be kept in the town; but, on the other hand, their removal deprives them of such private charity as they have hitherto been able to receive.

The local authorities assert, and, as your Excellency is aware, have reported to Constantinople, that order reigns in Sasun and Talori. I fear that this is but too true, and that no Armenians remain to disturb order, having all been either massacred or dispersed.

The real insurgents are, I think, making their way to the Persian frontier, and M. Robin tells me he met some who evidently had that intention. The weight of the heavy punishment meted out will therefore have fallen either on the innocent or on those who at the worst had only taken up arms in defence of their homes.

On the other hand, I am glad to report that the fear of disturbances and excesses in

the plain, which appeared imminent last week, has so far not been realized. Two or three villages have been more or less destroyed, but for some days past there have not even been rumours of further troubles in that direction; though some believe that there has been a concentration of the flying insurgents in the crater of Nimrud.

In the interests of general tranquillity, I am inclined to think that, next to their final escape, no better solution could be hoped for, as that mountain, though large, is so open, and its vast slopes so smooth and devoid of villages that they offer little scope for guerilla warfare or for a repetition of what has occurred in Sasun.

There have also been reports current of a disturbance at Bitlis, but I trust they are only bazaar rumours and will prove unfounded.

On the 25th, the Ferik Salik Pasha returned to Moush with one more battalion. This makes four which have so far come back, and the General asserts that only three are left in the mountain; as there are ten in Moush, and as there were certainly at least nineteen at the beginning, the disappearance of six battalions needs some explanation.

At a later interview the Vali told me, in reply to my inquiries, that he was offering pardon to all who would surrender. It appears that he has instructed the Bishops to make the offer known, but with the condition that the surrender must be effected within a week. He asserted that a small number of men had already come in, but I have reason to think that they were at once imprisoned, and with the former prisoners, about forty in number, will only be able to obtain their liberty if they will declare that all the destruction in the mountain was the work of the insurgents. No hope has been held out to them of returning to their homes, and, under these circumstances, I cannot hope that many will avail themselves of a pardon so illusory.

The officials here would seem to be strongly in favour of establishing the Sasun Armenians in the plain, though, with their usual reticence, they will not say so openly. I am convinced, however, that their Reports recommend this course. The Vali says he is awaiting instructions on the subject from Constantinople, and when I pointed out that, in common justice, the fugitives should be allowed to return to their homes, he tried to persuade me that the Armenians of the mountains were merely intruders who had settled on Kurdish lands, either unlawfully or at best as farmers on the Metayer system. He also asserted that the judicial examination of the refugees showed that the majority of them desired to be established elsewhere. As I told Ferid Bey, the whole of my information points in the opposite direction, and I am sure that, like all mountaineers, these people are ardently attached to their homes, and dread nothing more than a transference to the plains. I cannot say, and indeed it is immaterial, whether the Governor-General believes these two stories or not.

The refugee women and other Armenians believe that the land is already being divided among Kurds, and that it is with that object that certain Sheikhs and tribal Chiefs are now here, notably the young Sheikh of Zilan, a son and apparently a worthy successor to the fanatic who bore that name in 1895, and who died some two years ago.

Salik Pasha too spoke to me of the expected arrival of nomad Kurds in Sasun this year, seemingly regarding them as a valuable safeguard against any fresh insurrectionary outbreak.

On the 26th instant a disturbance occurred at the village of Derik near the bridge over the Murad Su or Eastern Euphrates, a few hours to the north of Moush. I see no reason to doubt the Armenian version of the matter as an ordinary cattle raid by a Captain of Hamidieh, resistance to which was followed by the plunder and destruction of the village, but it has been represented to the Vali as an attack by insurgents on regular troops, and I fear will be treated as such.

I have just learnt that Reshad Pasha, Mutessarif of Moush, has been recalled, and that the recently appointed Governor of Guenj will take his place, being succeeded by Aarif Pasha, a former Mutessarif of the Dersim who has been for some years at Constantinople. I know nothing about the Mutessarif of Guenj, but from the strong praise with which Salik Pasha spoke of him, I should be inclined to doubt whether his appointment will tend to the improvement of the condition of the Sandjak.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 95.

Vali of Bitlis to the Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)

(Telegraphic.) *May* 29 (*June* 11), 1904.

ON the 6th (19th) February, 29th February (11th April), and 13th (26th) April, before the arrival of the Imperial troops at the head-quarters of the insurgents, the Armenian rebels had attacked the mixed Mussulman and Christian village of Dapik and the purely Kurdish one of Lachikian. At Dapik they imprisoned the Mussulman inhabitants in a Christian house, and in both villages perpetrated every sort of violence and pillage, killing twenty-five persons, wounding ten, and burning the houses.

After that, on the Imperial troops entering Latchikian, which was close to the insurrectionary zone, an advisory body was formed composed of the Bishops, some members of the Administrative Council and judicial functionaries, and through their instrumentality the Priest Arakel was sent with a letter to give advice to the insurgents. After waiting a day and a night for his return, they advanced to Shenik and Semal, for the purpose of getting nearer to the insurrectionary zone, when they met the aforementioned Arakel, and received the answer that the insurgents refused to listen to advice.

At that moment the houses, which were suddenly set on fire by the insurgents (who were seen in the distance), began to burst into flames and bullets to rain from all sides upon the Imperial troops. The soldiers also in return began to pursue and to chastise the insurgents. The Consuls here are fully aware that no sort of irregularity took place in the course of these operations, which were thus truly and unreservedly carried out in a judicious manner, so as not to be a mark for any kind of censure—the probability of some such objections being raised having been taken into consideration with the judicial commission—and they (the Consuls) show complete satisfaction with the appropriate communications and assurances given them at every interview.

Confidence has been restored amongst the Armenian refugees, who now amount to about 700 men and 4,000 women, so that at the present moment there is no cause for anxiety left.

Last Thursday, indeed, under the pretext of fear, a few shops in the town were not opened, yet when officials were sent out immediately, as a demonstrative measure, to draw up a list of the shops that remained closed, yesterday they were all opened of their own accord.

There is no question here of enforced settlement in the plain of Moush, nor has any order been received from your Highness that could lead to any steps being taken in that direction.

There is no probability of any commotion here, nor has the population gone beyond the limits of submission. Should such a thing occur, on the one hand, immediate information will be given to the Commander-in-chief of the fourth Army Corps, and on the other punishment will be inflicted on the culprits.

Inclosure 3 in No. 95.

Mr. Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Moush, June* 13, 1904.

YESTERDAY my French and Russian colleagues and myself had a long conversation, in which we found ourselves in agreement upon the following point. We recognize that our observations to the authorities, however well founded, are met with systematic denials, in spite of our having made representations to them during nearly a whole month. If therefore, as appears probable, the Sublime Porte continues to encourage officials here in their disregard of our representations, our stay here seems fruitless. I regret to say daily outrages continue.

French and Russian Consuls are telegraphing to their respective Embassies in the above sense.

Inclosure 4 in No. 95.

Sir N. O'Conor to Mr. Heathcote.

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 14, 1904.

YESTERDAY the Grand Vizier telegraphed instructions to the Vali of Moush to allow such Armenians as have congregated there to return to their homes to afford protection and assistance to them, as also to those who may prefer to settle in the plain of Moush.

I should be glad to know whether the fugitives' houses have been occupied by nomad Arabs or Kurds, and, if so, to what extent this has taken place; also whether you and your colleagues have visited the fugitives and ascertained whether they are willing to return to their homes. Were any specific demands included in the representations alluded to in your telegram of yesterday, and, if so, I should be glad to know what they were. You say that outrages continue daily. What is their nature and extent?

As I am at present doing all I can to impress upon the Sublime Porte the immediate necessity of stopping all attacks upon, or prosecution of, the Armenians who live in the mountains, I should be greatly assisted by any definite statement of recent outrages by troops or ill-treatment by official authorities.

The Sublime Porte states that insurgent Armenians to the number of 600 have surrendered, and have, with the exception of those actually caught committing crime, been pardoned. I should be glad to hear whether this is the case and where they are.

Apparently the Ottoman Government have no objection to troops engaged in operations against insurgents being accompanied by you and your colleagues. Should there still be any troops operating in Susun or Talori district you had better arrange for this.

I suggested to Captain Tyrrell by telegraph on the 10th instant that he should proceed to Talori district, but as yet have received no reply from him.

No. 96.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 20.)

(No. 160.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 14, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 207 of the 9th instant, covering a letter from the "Friends of Armenia."

The representations made by me, and the orders issued by the Sublime Porte, in connection with the reported persecution of Armenians, and the outrages in the Sassun and Talori districts are already known to your Lordship, and will, I hope, result, at all events, in a cessation of these cruelties, but I do not think the "Friends of Armenia" need be anxious as to the security of the people living in the plains of Moush.

Reports were current a short time ago of a serious revolutionary outbreak at Van, but I am glad to say they have not been confirmed, and from the fact that His Majesty's Vice-Consul there reports that he is leaving at once for Gheliguzan, I feel sure there is no danger of grave disturbances.

The sad occurrences of the last six weeks following upon the arrival of Andranik and other insurgent leaders have left some 3,000 to 4,000 destitute Armenians gathered round Moush, many of whom will never, I fear, be able to regain and recover their homes in the mountains of Sassun. Their poverty is extreme, and if any extraneous help can be afforded them by the "Friends of Armenia," they could hardly do a more charitable action.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 97.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 20.)

(No. 166.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 12, 1904.

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a translation of a telegram which has been received by the Grand Vizier from the Vali of Bitlis, dated the 7th instant, respecting the revolutionary movement among the Armenians of that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 97.

Memorandum by Mr. Lamb.

THE Vali of Bitlis telegraphed on the 25th instant that the Alai Bey, who was still continuing his search for Andranik in the villages of Moush plain, having obtained information that eight insurgents were in hiding at Savi [?], situated about 10 miles from the town of Moush, proceeded there with a considerable force by night. On approaching the village at dawn on the 22nd they were fired upon from a field, one zaptieh being wounded in the leg.

Having located the spot from which the shots had come they opened a hot fire upon it, after maintaining which for some time they advanced, and found the dead bodies of seven insurgents. One of them proved to be a certain Parsegh, of whom the authorities had been in search for upwards of four years. From documents found on him it appeared that the chief leaders of the insurrection had been:—

1. Inak (Armenak), who was killed during the fighting in Sassoun;
2. Andranik;
3. Kievork;
4. Parsegh himself;

and that they had intended promoting a similar movement in Zeitoun.

Further information obtained by the Alai Bey was to the effect that the insurgents had sent four men to Khinous to serve as guides to some other revolutionaries who were expected to cross over the Russian frontier at Kara Orman (? Kara Ourghan), accompanied by a Russian Colonel [*sic*].

The Vali further reports that the number of refugees at Moush has now reached 3,000, and that, in order to relieve the congestion in the town, efforts were being made to distribute them amongst the villages. Some 600 men had been offered subsistence money in return for work on the road between Moush and Bitlis, but had refused to work.

(Signed) HARRY H. LAMB.

Moush, June 11, 1904.

No. 98.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 20.)

(No. 167.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 15, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 892 of the 24th ultimo, and to previous correspondence respecting the recent events that have taken place in the neighbourhood of Moush, I have the honour to state that Mr. Heathcote reports that the Russian Consul, who was expected about the 10th ultimo, only reached that place on the 11th instant, and that he has since joined his British and French colleagues in their discussions and representations to the Turkish authorities.

Mr. Heathcote further reports the arrival at Moush from Bitlis on the 10th instant of a Russian Colonel. This is presumably Staff Colonel Loukoff, whose approaching visit to Erzeroum has already been reported to me by His Majesty's Consul at that

place. Mr. Shipley, in informing me of the Colonel's pending visit, stated that it was believed that he was coming officially to inspect the concentration of Turkish troops in Armenia, which had caused excitement in Russian circles in the Caucasus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 99.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 109.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 24, 1904.*

I HAVE received the following telegram, dated to-day, from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum :—

"On Monday last Turkish troops surrounded 45 Armenians near frontier, and killed 37, taking 5 wounded as prisoners. The Turkish loss is reckoned at 4 men killed, 15 others wounded. There are said to be 300 Armenians in concealment on the frontier. Turkish troops are collected to the number of 500."

By the word "frontier" Mr. Shipley means the Russian frontier, I presume.

No. 100.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 486.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 21, 1904.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 459 of the 14th instant, I have the honour to report that, after consulting with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires and in agreement with the French Ambassador, I again spoke to the Grand Vizier yesterday in regard to the position of affairs in Armenia.

I learnt from his Highness that he had informed the Council of Ministers of the several assurances and promises he had made to me, and that they had come to the following decisions :—

1. That permission should be granted to the refugees at Moush and other places to return to their homes in Sasun.

2. That £ T. 5,000 should be appropriated and sent to the Vali of Bitlis to assist the refugees in rebuilding their houses.

3. That barracks should be built in the neighbourhood of Susun to protect the Armenians against the predatory raids of the Kurds and to check any revolutionary outbreak at the beginning.

4. That a general amnesty should be granted to all those who surrendered and who were not caught in the actual commission of crime.

5. That an efficient gendarmerie should be reorganized in Bitlis and the neighbouring vilayets, and that an inquiry should be held into the mode and system of administration in order to check existing abuses.

The Grand Vizier then proceeded to say that he had been in communication with Zekki Pasha, the Commander-in-chief of the IVth Army Corps, and had impressed upon him the importance of keeping the Hamidieh troops well in hand, as he could not escape responsibility for any outrages committed by them, and that he had again sent stringent instructions to the Valis of Bitlis, Kharput, Diabekir, and Erzeroum for the maintenance of public order and the protection of Armenians.

His Highness further said that about twenty Kurdish Chiefs or leading personages, whose presence was considered a danger in the present excited state of public feeling, had been exiled, and were now on their way to Trezibond, whence they would be sent into exile in the Vilayet of Castamuni, and detained there for the present. He desired, however, that this information should be considered confidential, as his action might be resented by his countrymen.

According to the latest reports from the Vali of Bitlis, the number of houses destroyed in the Sasun district (Shalluch and Talori) was estimated at 574 houses, of which 49 were stated to be Mussulman and 525 Christian. The cost of reconstruction is estimated at about £ T. 5 (*l.* 10*s.*) for each house. His Highness was, however, unable

to tell me the number of lives lost in the late occurrences; but he had no doubt that full information on this point would shortly reach him, and he would be ready to communicate it to me. It is of great importance to have information on this point in order to understand the actual situation, but I am still without information from Mr. Heathcote, nor have the French or Russian Consuls estimated the numbers in their reports to their Embassies.

His Highness added that he received on the 14th instant a telegram from the Vali of Bitlis (copy of which I inclose) referring to the employment given to the destitute refugees in constructing a road from Moush to Bitlis, and stating that the main object of the insurgents was to provoke intervention by the English and French Consuls.

I have just heard that an Imperial Iradé has been issued sanctioning the decisions come to by the Council of Ministers on Sunday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 100.

Vali of Bitlis to the Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)
(Telegraphic.) *Moush, June 1 (14), 1904.*

IN reply to your telegram of the 30th May (12th June).

My previous reports are supported by documentary evidence of an official character. The work on the road is at a quarter of an-hour's distance from the town and 300 or 400 labourers, all of them Armenians, are daily employed on it and no accident has occurred.

The statements of the Consuls as to people being averse to working on the road on account of the absence of personal safety naturally cannot be attributed to an impartial feeling. The proposal that they should work on the road was made through the Acting Bishop of Moush, and in the reply received it was stated that the reason for their not working was that they were weak and ill.

No one has yet notified a desire to proceed from Van to Gheliguzan or elsewhere.

It is proved by the contents of some important documents seized at Gheliguzan that their main object was to bring about the intervention of the English and French Consuls.

No. 101.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 494.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 22, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Lordship the following summary of the telegraphic correspondence which has passed between the Embassy and His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush during the past week, as presented in this form it may assist your Lordship to follow the course of recent events more conveniently.

Mr. Heathcote was informed on the 14th instant that Captain Tyrrell was starting for Van, *en route* to Moush and Gheliguzan. He was also told to impress upon the Vali that the persecution of innocent inhabitants was as prejudicial to the real interests of Turkey as to the feelings of humanity, and that it was absolutely necessary that outrages should cease, and that the refugees should be allowed to return home and be properly protected.

Mr. Heathcote replied that he believed that fifty-three refugees desired to return home if their safety was guaranteed. He added that about 600 men had surrendered, but that he thought the majority of them were rather refugees than insurgents; that lack of direct evidence made it impossible to make specific demands against Kurds, and that the Vali simply assumed the attitude that all the reports rendered by the Consuls were lies, and had endeavoured to extort written declarations from prisoners denying that the troops had burned the villages.

On the 17th instant Mr. Heathcote was told that it was desirable that Captain Tyrrell should follow any military operations being carried out, and that he (Mr. Heathcote) should keep in touch with Vali, who had been warned by the Grand Vizier that he

would be held personally responsible for fresh outrages, and that the Ottoman Government had promised to provide funds for the purpose of rebuilding the houses of Armenians in the Sasun district which had been destroyed.

On the same day Mr. Heathcote telegraphed that the excesses complained of by the Consuls were:—

1. Single murders.
2. Kurdish raid.
3. Brutalities committed by troops and gendarmes during their search for arms in the villages or for insurgents in the plains, and their destruction of houses.

Mr. Heathcote added that the Turkish authorities maintained that the hardships complained of were a necessary result of the rebellion and provocation of insurgents, and reported a conversation with the Vali, whose attitude had somewhat changed consequent upon a rebuke received from Constantinople. He also reported that the French Consul's life had been threatened, according to rumours prevalent among low Mussulmans.

To this telegram a reply was sent that it would be only possible to secure punishment of guilty parties if precise details as to place, nature of outrages, number of victims, persons implicated, &c., were furnished, and it was impressed upon him that the main points for the present was to put a stop to the continuance of outrages. Mr. Heathcote was at the same time asked if he had any proof that Kurds had taken part in the outrages.

Mr. Heathcote reported on the same day that the Armenian insurgents had presented five conditions to the French Consul, including permission for them to return to their homes under a guarantee of security by the Great Powers; the rebuilding of their houses and churches; the restoration to them of all property and live-stock stolen from them; a prohibition of nomad Kurds coming into the district; and that, seeing the danger caused to women principally by the presence of licentious soldiery, that no barracks should be built.

On the 18th Mr. Heathcote reported a marked improvement in the Vali's attitude, due, he supposed, to the pressure brought to bear by the Embassy at Constantinople.

On the following day he telegraphed that the Porte had sent orders that, in consequence of reported threats against the life of the French Consul, armed escorts were to accompany the Consuls when they left the town, a measure which would make it impossible to conduct all useful inquiry in future. He also reported that the Vali had received a telegraphic Iradé direct from the Palace, ordering the refugees to settle in the plain, which would be in direct contradiction to the promise given to the Embassy that funds should be provided for the rebuilding of houses. Mr. Heathcote stated in the same telegram that he had no proof of participation of Kurds in recent events.

On the 19th June Mr. Heathcote was instructed to inform Captain Tyrrell that the Porte had been held responsible for his safety, and that, as they would consequently insist upon his being accompanied by a large escort, which would limit his freedom of action, he should endeavour to attach himself to any body of troops operating in the field, and not proceed into the mountain districts without consulting the Consuls as to the safety of doing so.

On the 21st Mr. Heathcote telegraphed that a fight had occurred two days previously at Derkevank, a short hour east of Moush, and that he and the Russian Consul arrived there at 2 P.M., and were joined later by Captain Tyrrell. Villagers said gendarmes attacked, whereas gendarmes stated the opposite. One wounded insurgent, who said that he was a Russian non-commissioned officer, was found among villagers. Consuls saw eight corpses and three wounded, and believed that there were more in the fields. They also disbelieved the statement of the authorities that they were armed when killed, and they hold Infantry Colonel Yaver and Colonel of Gendarmerie Izzet responsible for killing innocent villagers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 102.

Foreign Office to Anglo-Armenian Association.

Foreign Office, June 28, 1904.

Sir,

IN reply to your letter of the 21st instant, I am directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to state that he is unable at present to communicate to the Council of the Anglo-Armenian Association any reports from His Majesty's Consul at Bitlis upon the recent disturbances in Armenia.

His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, in a despatch dated the 14th June, reports that he had a long interview with the Grand Vizier on the preceding day, when he pointed out to his Highness the responsibility which would be incurred by the Ottoman Government should the alleged participation of the Kurds in the recent destruction of the lives and property of Armenians prove well-founded. He impressed upon him at the same time the necessity of showing clearly that the Imperial Government disapproved of such lawless acts, and were determined to repress them.

Sir Nicholas O'Conor also called attention to the design ascribed to the Turkish authorities of driving the Armenians from their mountain homes and obliging them to settle in the plains, and urged his Highness to send orders to the Vali to allow all the refugees who desired to return to their homes to do so at once, and to afford them protection and security against possible attacks by the Kurds.

The Grand Vizier agreed at once to do this, and in Sir Nicholas O'Conor's presence dispatched a telegram to the Vali of Bitlis in this sense, adding that if any of the refugees preferred to remain in the plains of Moush, they should equally be protected.

Mr. Vice-Consul Heathcote has been advised of the dispatch of this telegram, and has been instructed to report as to the manner in which these orders are executed.

Arrangements have also been made with the consent of the Ottoman Government for His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van to accompany any Turkish troops who are still engaged in operations against the insurgents, and Captain Tyrell arrived at Moush for that purpose on the 19th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 103.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 238 A.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 29, 1904.

THE Turkish Ambassador made a communication to me to-day to the following effect:—

The gravity of the misdeeds committed by Armenian agitators in certain parts of Anatolia had, perhaps, hardly been properly realized, and it would be impossible to praise too highly the spirit of generosity shown by the Turkish Government, from the beginning, in the task of repression.

The actual facts were as follows: The insurrectionary movement had been prepared long beforehand by the Hentchakist and other Armenian revolutionary Committees working abroad, and was in no way due to the pretended abuses in the Ottoman Administration, as certain detractors of the Turkish Government would have it to be believed.

The Committee had indeed planned last year to send emissaries to Sassun and to Talori with the mission of stirring up the peaceful population, and committing acts of pillage, murder, and incendiarism, in order that these misdeeds should subsequently be ascribed to the Mussulmans, and public opinion should thus be roused against the Turkish Government. The documents seized upon the persons of the rebels left no room for doubt on this head.

The Ottoman Government, warned in time of these criminal projects, sent good advice to the Armenians in the localities affected through the Armenian Patriarch, and at the same time instructed the Imperial authorities to warn them against the machinations of the revolutionists, which could only cause their ruin. Unhappily these methods of persuasion did not attain their object: certain Armenian agitators, who came to Sassun and Talori from Russia and Persia, succeeded in gathering some followers and in committing the misdeeds which had been recorded in the press. The Turkish Government would have been within their rights in acting with rigorous severity, but, actuated by a lively desire to prevent the effusion of blood, they had wished first to exhaust every means of conciliation. They had dispatched Armenian notables, with a priest at their head, to the rebels, in order to bring them to reason and to promise them pardon if they made their submission.

Once again these wise counsels failed to produce the desired effect. The rebels, kept in a state of perpetual excitement by the principal agitators, rejected the advice proffered, and it was only after they had made an armed attack upon the Imperial troops that the latter were obliged to retaliate. Thanks to the measures adopted, order and tranquillity had now been restored.

The Ottoman Government, paternally solicitous for the welfare of the Armenian population, had proclaimed a general amnesty. They had given orders that the houses destroyed by the rebels should be rebuilt; that the necessary measures should be adopted to reinstate the refugees without delay, and to provide them with food and seed; that those who desired to work, in order to obtain money for their subsistence, should be employed on road construction; and that guard-houses should be erected to lodge the troops charged with assuring public security. The refugees who desired to return to their villages would be left in freedom. But it should of course be clearly understood that rebels taken with arms in their hands would be excepted from the general amnesty and brought to justice.

His Excellency added that a wide publicity would be given to the details of the judicial proceedings, in order that public opinion should be edified as to the true causes of the recent disorders and the organization of the revolutionary movement.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 104.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 240.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 30, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 486 of the 21st instant, reporting the decisions which have been arrived at by the Council of Ministers and sanctioned by Imperial Iradé with a view to alleviating distress and restoring order in Armenia.

I have learnt with satisfaction the successful result of the representations which your Excellency has made on this subject to theTurkish Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 105.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 496.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 25, 1904.*

AT the end of an audience which I had with the Sultan yesterday, His Majesty expressed the hope that I should not believe the false reports circulated in the European press in regard to recent events in Armenia.

The Sultan went on to say that all the troubles and disturbances in the Sassun district had been caused by numerous bands of insurgents crossing the frontier with the declared intention of provoking insurrection.

In order to limit, as far as possible, the effusion of blood, a large military force of regular troops had been concentrated around Mousb and sent against the revolutionaries.

He had given the most positive orders and done all in his power to prevent outrages and massacres of the innocent inhabitants; and he hoped I would report in this sense to my Government.

I replied that the reports from our Consul at Mousb, who was acting in co-operation with his French and Russian colleagues, were incomplete as to what really had taken place, but that the presence there of some 3,000 destitute refugees and the destruction of over 500 Armenian houses were altogether inexplicable, and, I very much feared, pointed to the perpetration of grave and brutal excesses. I was unwilling to believe that the regular army had committed such acts, and if they were committed by the Kurds, while such a large military force was in the field, the crime was aggravated. I had heard reports of outrages and atrocities which I sincerely hoped were not true, but they caused anxiety, and I did not hesitate to mention them to His Majesty. Nothing could be more detrimental to His Majesty and the security of his Empire than a repetition of massacre and outrages in Armenia. I would not answer for the consequences of the indignation it would create throughout Europe, as well as in Macedonia, where the Powers were now striving to introduce reforms which, if faithfully carried out, would maintain His Majesty's supremacy and authority. It was in His Majesty's interest to prove, in some striking manner, that he would not tolerate outrages upon his Armenian subjects, who would be his most loyal subjects from the day they were guaranteed security of life and property, and I believed he could only attain this end by inflicting the utmost vigour of the law upon any Kurdish Aghas who were caught pillaging and murdering, and doing it in such a way that all Kurdistan knew of it.

The Sultan said that the stories I had heard were lies, and that the policy of the revolutionary Committees was to circulate these mendacious reports throughout Europe. He did not deny that many lives had been lost on the side both of the soldiers and the insurgents, and probably some innocent persons who had been forced to take up arms by the insurgents who had crossed the frontier had been killed, but he had given the most stringent orders not to allow the Kurds to approach the theatre of the disturbances, and he was confident that his orders had been obeyed. His Majesty believed that the Consular Reports would ultimately prove that his statements were correct.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 106.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 498.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 28, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 305 of the 25th ultimo, on the subject of the disturbances among the Kurds of the Diabekir district, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting a more satisfactory condition of things in a district where anxiety prevailed not long ago.

I consider the improvement is chiefly due to the appointment of an energetic and capable Vali recommended by the Grand Vizier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 106.

Acting Vice-Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 14.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, June 14, 1904.*

WITH reference to previous despatches on the condition of this vilayet, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that though the quarrel between Ibrahim Pasha and Khalil Bey would seem to be as far as ever from a peaceful solution, and though disturbances are continually reported from Sevarek and Bishari, still on the whole the immediate outlook is less disquieting than it has been during the last two months. The disturbances above referred to are exclusively inter-tribal, and the Christians, as such, have in no way suffered from them.

Diarbekir itself is quiet, and there seems to be a general feeling among the Christians that, unless Moslem fanatics should be unexpectedly worked upon by influences from outside, there is actually little cause for anxiety.

In the course of a short tour in the southern part of this district I visited Derik last week, which has recently been the scene of considerable disturbances, as reported in my despatch No. 10 of the 24th May. At the time of my visit all was quiet, and the leaders are still detained in prison.

Ibrahim Pasha recently applied to the local authorities for troops to assist him against Khalil Bey, but the request was very properly refused, and it is much to be hoped that even more positive steps may be taken to check a feud which has for many weeks disorganized all traffic and communication between Aleppo and Diarbekir.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

No. 107.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 499.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 27, 1904.*

I HAD the honour to transmit to your Lordship, in my despatch No. 364 of the 13th ultimo, a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout reporting upon disturbances in the districts of Shouf and Batsoun.

Mr. Drummond Hay has subsequently kept me informed of the movements of the Governor-General, Mouzaffer Pasha, who proceeded to Beit-ud-Din for the purpose of restoring order. It would appear that Mouzaffer Pasha, before starting for the disturbed districts, sent Ali Bey, a nephew of Nessib Bey Djemblat, to use his personal influence to tranquillize the people, and that the tour was consequently performed fairly satisfactorily, although the Governor-General was not received anywhere with any popular enthusiasm, and was escorted by a guard of dragoons from Beit-ud-Din.

Mr. Drummond Hay now reports that after Mouzaffer Pasha's return from the tour in North Lebanon he made several changes among his Kaïmakams. Sheikh Reshid-el-Khazen, of the Maronitz district of Kesrawan, was dismissed, and replaced by Sheikh Canaan Daher, of Djezzin. The Emir Faïk Shehab, of Batroun, was given the latter's post, and was himself succeeded by Naaman Bey, Hobeisk, former President of the Civil Court of Appeal.

The ostensible reason for Sheikh Reshid's dismissal is said to have been an unauthorized visit he paid to the French Admiral, but it is generally believed that the real cause was a quarrel between the Governor-General's son and a Bishop who is the intimate friend of the Sheikh.

Mr. Drummond Hay states that the Governor-General is now entirely led by certain members of his family and others, including lately the Emir Mustapha Arsean, whom he represents as being more set upon their personal advantages than upon the good of the Lebanon, whilst Mouzaffer Pasha has allowed himself to be persuaded by his satellites that a policy opposed to the influence of the Powers will meet with favour at the Porte.

Mouzaffer Pasha is further reported to have made complaints to the Porte against his Council of Administration, which, after a vacation of eighteen days from the 28th instant, should reassemble at Beit-ud-Din on the 14th proximo, and it is thought that he may be meditating the dissolution of that body.

There is a precedent for such action, as Naoum Pasha dissolved that Assembly in 1892, but on that occasion the step was taken with the approval of the Government and with the knowledge of the Embassies, and it was a necessary measure to enable him to carry out certain radical reforms and to purge a notoriously corrupt Administration.

Mr. Drummond Hay states that he believes the inhabitants of the Lebanon to be on the whole satisfied with the majority of the members of the Council representing their different sects, and that any arbitrary dismissals might possibly disturb the public peace.

My French colleague holds the view that the moment is fast approaching when it will be necessary for the Powers to take cognizance of the complaints which have been made from several quarters against the present Governor-General of the Lebanon, whose corruption is rapidly bringing the whole autonomous régime into disrepute, but I am of opinion that we should act with great caution in the matter, and that we should, at all events at present, rather confide to our respective Consuls at Beyrout the task of warning the Governor-General of the consequences of his policy.

It is, however, much to be deprecated that Mouzaffer Pasha should shape his policy in accordance with what he may believe will best please the Sultan and the Porte, and I took an occasion during a recent conversation with the Grand Vizier to remind his Highness of the special position of the Lebanon Government, and to impress upon him that any interference on the part of the Palace or the Porte in its internal administration would be strongly resented by the Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 108.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 503.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 28, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a letter which I have received from the Constantinople branch of the Armenian revolutionary party styled "Huntchagists," requesting me to use my best endeavours to put a stop to the atrocities which are designed to exterminate the Armenian people, and a continuance of which will force the Society to threaten the public security of Constantinople.

I am rather disposed to think that this Commission may be indicative of some proposed action on the part of this revolutionary party, as I hear that about 200 Armenians have been recently arrested and banished from Constantinople, which would seem to show that the Sultan's secret police has once more unearthed the machinations of a section of his many enemies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 108.

The "Huntchagiste" Local Branch to Sir N. O'Conor.

Excellence, *Constantinople, le 23 Juin, 1904.*

LA branche locale du Comité Arménien Huntchagiste a l'honneur de faire part à votre Excellence que la conduite tyrannique du Gouvernement Turc a réduit le peuple Arménien dans un état absolument insupportable.

Massacres, exils, violements, et emprisonnements sont mis en pratique avec plus de férocité que jamais, ayant pour but d'exterminer le peuple Arménien et étrangler la voix juste de sa protestation.

Les derniers crimes infernales de Sassoun viennent encore une fois frissonner l'humanité. Or, le Comité Huntchagiste se sent le devoir de prier votre Excellence, comme le Représentant d'une grande Puissance, d'avoir, au nom de l'humanité, l'extrême obligeance de mettre en pratique toute votre influence auprès le Gouvernement Turc, pour donner fin à ces cruautés, dont la continuation nous obligera de menacer la paix de Constantinople.

Dans le doux espoir que votre Excellence, au nom de l'intérêt public et de l'humanité, fera le nécessaire pour empêcher le renouvellement des massacres de 1895–96.

Nous prions, &c.
(Partie Révolutionnaire Huntchagiste, Branche de Constantinople.)

No. 109.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 504.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 28, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting disturbances in that town between Moslems and Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 109.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 50.)

Beyrout, June 21, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 17th instant three Christians, who were leaving Beyrout in the evening for their homes in the Lebanon with rifles and cartridges purchased from smugglers, were attacked by two Moslems who endeavoured to seize their goods. The Christians, in defence, killed one of their assailants and wounded the other. They then escaped to the mountain before the arrival of the police.

The prompt measures taken by the Vali in calling out the troops and proceeding in person to the spot (which is situated in the quarter where the events occurred last year) prevented a general rising.

On the following two days several Christians were assaulted by Moslems, but the latter were immediately checked by the police. A severe flogging was administered to one aggressor, and another, who menaced the police with a revolver, was shot and severely wounded.

During these occurrences there was a slight panic among Christians, and many shops were closed, but owing to the energy and determination displayed by Khalil Pasha their fears are gradually subsiding.

I should mention that the Moslem who was killed was a notorious smuggler and evil character, condemned to six years' imprisonment in connection with the events of last year.

The chief Moslem notables of the town were yesterday summoned before the Vali, who upbraided them for allowing bad characters to frequent their quarters, and warned them that they would be collectively held responsible in future for the surrender of criminals who are known to be sheltered by any members of their community.

I understand that the Vali has again submitted to the Sublime Porte that the failure of Monzalier Pasha to seize the fugitive Christian criminals in the Lebanon is a constant menace to the public peace of Beyrout.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 110.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 507.)

Constantinople, June 28, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, respecting the progress of the works on the Haifa–Damascus Railway.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 110.

Mr. Drummond Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 46.)

Beirout, June 7, 1904.

Sir,

THE Acting British Vice-Consul at Haifa reports that a section of 80 kilom. of the railroad between Haifa and Jisr-el-Mujamieh (the bridge over the Jordan) was opened for traffic on the 3rd instant.

Twelve kilom. on the eastern side of the Jordan have been completed by Turkish soldiers, and there remains a distance of 68 kilom. to Mzerib, which is divided into eight sections. Their construction has been undertaken by the following contractors:—

Two Germans, two sections; an Italian, two sections; a Pole, one section; Damascus natives, three sections; and they have agreed to complete their respective

sections within ten and a-half months. The cost of these works will amount to between 250,000*l.* and 300,000*l.*

Rumours are still prevalent that the Hedjaz line will be laid to Akaba.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 111.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 509.)

Constantinople, June 28, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a Memorandum from Mr. Lamb, First Dragoman of His Majesty's Embassy, communicating telegrams received by the Sublime Porte from the Vali of Bitlis, respecting the capture, at the village of Terkavank, near Moush, of a certain Kirkov, described as a Russian Lieutenant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 111.

Memorandum by Mr. Lamb.

(No. 214.)

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith a translation of a telegram from the Vali of Bitlis, dated the 19th instant, reporting the capture of a certain Kirkov at the village of Terkavank, near Moush.

In a further telegram received to-day, this person is described as a Russian Lieutenant, and it is stated that Captain Tyrrell had applied for and obtained permission to interview him.

The Vali also reports that the search-parties operating in the Gheliguzan Valley have unearthed fourty-four more Mauser and other rifles secreted by the insurgents. The number of those discovered up to the present time is estimated at 1,500.

(Signed) HARRY H. LAMB.

June 21, 1904.

Inclosure 2 in No. 111.

Telegram from the Vali of Bitlis, dated June 6 (19), 1904.

(Translation.)

NEWS having been brought that the insurgent leaders Andranik and Kievork were at the village of Ahurindj, situated at the foot of the mountains over against the town of Moush, after consultation, the Alai Bey (Izzet Bey), together with Colonel Yaver Bey, of the regular army, and certain officials, surrounded that village last night, and proceeded to search it at daybreak to-day.

Failing to discover the insurgents, they were on the way back, and had arrived in front of the village of Terkavank, which lies nearer to Moush, when some twenty rifle shots were fired on them by insurgents, who had taken up a position there. In the return fire eleven insurgents were killed, and in the subsequent search a Russian revolutionary named Kirkov Azarian Mirzalkoff [*sic*], with two native servants, were captured in a room. On the report of this, these persons were sent for, and Kirkov, who was wounded, was separately confined in the military hospital, where he was examined until nearly 10 o'clock this evening in the presence of the judicial authorities, of Selim Pasha, the Acting Commandant of Moush, the above-mentioned Yaver Bey, and others. As his statements explain, the seditious documents which were seized at Gheliguzan and elsewhere, and which have been translated, and shed light on the real circumstances of this mountain insurrection, they are being elucidated, and investigations are at the present moment being conducted on the spot, the results of which, together with the details of the affair, shall be fully reported.

No. 112.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 510.)
My Lord,

Therapia, June 28, 1904.

IN consequence of information which I received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, that during the latter part of 1902 a Takhuri Kurd, Nimat Agha, a Yuzbashi of Hamidie, had left his own village of Akhorik, owing to a dispute with Hussein Bey, Chief of the Jakhuri, and had settled in the Christian village of Doni (some three hours east of Van), where he had managed to buy land which was mortgaged to the Agricultural Bank, and was oppressing and ill-treating the villagers, I addressed strong representations to the Sublime Porte urging the removal of Nimat Agha from Doni, as his presence was undoubtedly a menace to the tranquillity of the neighbourhood.

I have now received a despatch from Captain Tyrrell, reporting that the Kurd has at last been evicted from the village and forced to remove all his belongings, which, I trust, will prove a final settlement of the question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 113.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 513.)
My Lord,

Therapia, June 28, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Lordship the following summary of despatches and telegrams which I have received since writing my despatch No. 494 of the 22nd instant from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush upon the subject of the recent disturbances in the Sasun and Moush districts:—

In reporting, in a despatch dated the 15th instant, the arrival of the Russian Consul at Moush on the 10th instant, Mr. Heathcote says that the long delay which intervened between the original date announced for his arrival and the event itself has had a bad influence upon his position and that of the French Consul, by impressing the local Turkish authorities with a belief that there was dissension among the three Powers chiefly interested in Armenia.

In the same despatch Mr. Heathcote reports the arrival at Moush of a Russian Colonel named Liahoff and a Captain of artillery, said to be furnished with an Imperial Iradé authorizing them to ascertain the situation, numbers, and other details of troops collected near Moush in order that they may be able to demonstrate to their Government that the concentration of troops is not directed against Russia. These officers continued their journey to Erzeroum after remaining at Moush five or six days.

I am informed by the Porte that the above-mentioned officers were supposed to be travelling in pursuit of botanical researches, and that their close attention to fortified positions had caused some anxiety to the Turkish authorities.

In a further despatch under date of the 15th June Mr. Heathcote states that all abuses brought to the notice of the Vali by himself and the French Consul have been contradicted by the Turkish official, whose whole course of action throughout the troubles has proved his total want of sincerity and his unwillingness to help the Consular officers to arrive at a true estimate of what has occurred.

Mr. Heathcote represents in this despatch that the attitude adopted towards them by the local Turkish officials makes the stay of the Consuls at Moush useless, since the Kurds realize that no heed is paid to their remonstrances, and that a Kurd may now kill any Armenian, whether in pursuance of an old grudge or for plunder, with impunity, since he has merely to say that his victim was an insurgent in order to avoid all danger of punishment.

The outrages that have occurred he groups under three heads:—

(*a.*) Single murders.

(*b.*) Kurdish raids of the usual type, covered by the excuse that the victims either were themselves insurgents or had harboured such. In the event of resistance, the village is wholly or partially burned, and the insurgents are made responsible for its destruction.

(*c.*) Search for arms or insurgents carried out with great cruelty and, it is credibly asserted, torture under the direction of the authorities. In these cases any person seen endeavouring to escape from a village is shot down as an insurgent, and if any excuse offers the houses are burnt, and, as before, the insurgents are accused of having done it.

Mr. Heathcote cites a case in which a man was killed whilst a search was being carried out, and two children perished in one out of three houses burnt at a place called Arakh, near Moush, of which he has been able to obtain direct evidence. This incident I have brought to the notice of the Grand Vizier, who, in my presence, at once sent a telegram to the Vali calling for a full report.

The Public Prosecutor has shown the three Consuls papers captured at Moush, which the Turkish officials claimed to afford proof that the insurgents had commenced the attack and had burnt the Sasun villages. Mr. Heathcote told the Public Prosecutor that he considered the evidence as valueless, since the papers contained little information, and that what there was went rather to prove the contrary to the Turkish assertion. He adds in his report to me that all the papers showed, even supposing that all were genuine, was the existence of a revolutionary organization, that fighting had taken place, and that the rebel leaders intended, under certain conditions, to call upon the villagers to burn their own houses.

I am impressing upon Mr. Heathcote that it is most desirable that I should be supplied with facts, substantiated as far as may be possible by reliable witnesses, and as there is little or no use by making general statements to the Porte that atrocities have been committed, whereas I have always found the Grand Vizier ready to call for an instant inquiry when I have been able to furnish his Highness with details.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 114.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 514.)
My Lord,

Therapia, June 28, 1904.

THE reports I have received up to date from Mr. Heathcote leave me still in doubt as to what has exactly taken place in the mountainous districts of Sasun and Talori, but I have in a separate despatch summarized all the information I have received from him.

I learnt, however, from the Russian Chargé d'Affaires yesterday morning—and the information was subsequently confirmed by the Grand Vizier—that 4,500 refugees had left Moush for Sasun accompanied by several Turkish officials, and that a Commission had been formed to supervise their re-establishment in their homes. M. Swetchin and I agreed that it would be desirable that some prominent members of the Armenian community should be appointed on the Commission, and upon my proposing it later in the day to the Grand Vizier, his Highness at once telegraphed to the Vali to invite the assistance of two or three Armenian Notables.

In reply to my remonstrances at the want of attention paid by the Vali to the requests of the Consul and of any check to the brutal proceedings of the Kurds and gendarmes against innocent Armenians, as reported by Mr. Heathcote in general terms, his Highness again requested me to ask for definite information as to persons, place, and date. It was impossible for him to take up complaints framed in such vague terms as were sent by Mr. Heathcote, but he promised to make the strictest inquiry into any cases which were sufficiently definite and precise as to enable him to send categorical instructions to the local authorities. His Highness added that no doubt Captain Tyrrell would send me a full report on recent occurrences, as he understood he had gone to Sasun with the Military Commandant, Salih Pasha. The Captain would also have an opportunity of seeing how the work of re-establishing the refugees in their homes was being carried out. Money had been sent from the surrounding vilayets to the Vali of Van, who had now some 5,000 liras at his disposal.

We shall, I hope, ere long be in a position to form a correct judgment as to whether the insurgents or the troops or the Kurds are responsible for the extensive devastation and ruin which have undoubtedly marked recent operations in the Sasun district, as also to learn how far this destruction of property has been accompanied by

massacre and outrages. Should it be shown that, notwithstanding all the assurances given by the Porte and the stringent instructions sent at various times by the Grand Vizier not to allow these hordes to approach the theatre of the disturbances, the Kurds participated in the attacks upon the villagers, I think it is absolutely necessary that we should ask for the summary dismissal of the Vali of Bitlis, whose appointment to his present post was, to say the least, ill-judged, and who bears a suspicious reputation in connection with the events of 1896–97.

I have &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 115.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 517.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 28, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I communicated to M. Swetchine on the 26th instant the substance of Mr. Shipley's despatch from Erzeroum, stating that forty-five insurgents had appeared close to the frontier, of whom thirty-seven were killed, that casualties occurred also on the side of the Turkish soldiers, and that, moreover, 300 insurgents were said to be in hiding close to the Russian frontier.

I took the opportunity to point out to M. Swetchine the unfavourable impression that would be created in Europe by the constant passage of insurgents across the frontier, and I expressed the hope that the Governor-General of the Caucasus would be instructed to keep a very sharp look-out, and to prevent these bands entering Turkey.

M. Swetchine replied that the earnest attention of Prince Galitzen had already been called to this matter by the Embassy, and that the Prince had replied that the frontier was long and difficult to guard, and that he was doing all he could to prevent insurgents crossing it.

I have &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 116.

Question asked in the House of Commons, July 5, 1904.

Mr. Stevenson.—To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government will enter into friendly conference with the Governments of France and Italy with a view to the early augmentation of the Consular Staff in the European and Asiatic provinces of Turkey, by the appointment of travelling Consular Attachés and Assistants to the existing Consulates in those vilayets.

Answer.

The Consular Staff which His Majesty's Government maintain in the European and Asiatic provinces of Turkey is, in their opinion, sufficient for the protection of British interests, and as at present advised, they see no reason for increasing it.

No. 117.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 253.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 6, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 510 of the 28th ultimo, relating to the proceedings of Ninnat Aghn at Doni, where he was oppressing and ill-treating the villagers, and reporting that, as a result of your representations, he has been removed from the village.

The action taken by you in the matter has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 117.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 116.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, July 7, 1904.*

ARMENIA. Referring to my despatch No. 514 of the 28th ultimo, according to telegraphic information from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush, vilayet is undisturbed, and return of refugees to the mountains is proceeding satisfactorily.

No. 118.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 115.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, July 7, 1904.*

HAVE you heard anything of a report, which has reached the Pro-Armenian Committee by telegram, to the effect that Kurds and regular troops are attacking and killing Armenian travellers in the neighbourhood of Van, on the ground of their being insurgents, and that this is the beginning of a general massacre in the province?

No. 119.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 257.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 8, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 496 of the 25th ultimo, reporting a conversation which you had with the Sultan on the subject of recent events in Armenia.

The language which you held to His Imperial Majesty on that occasion has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 120.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 531.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 5, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad has informed me, by telegraph, that, in view of disturbances which have broken out between the Madan and the Benilam tribes, 400 infantry and one field-gun, under the command of a Major, were dispatched from Bagdad yesterday for Amara to restore order in that neighbourhood.

I have to-day received a telegram from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Bussorah, in which he states that disturbances similar to those reported in Mr. Crow's despatch No. 75 of the 10th November, copy of which I forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 810 of the 8th December, 1903, have been going on near Amara for about a month, and have attained serious proportions, many Arabs having been killed and wounded, though not in engagements with Turkish troops.

He further states that the Vali left Bussorah on the 3rd instant, and that 300 soldiers from Bagdad moved to the seat of the disturbances, but that Sadun Pasha of the Montefik tribe, interfered and surrounded and disarmed half of them.

A subsequent telegram, dated to-day, reports that Sadun Pasha has been heavily defeated by the Turkish troops, and some hundreds of his men killed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 121.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 533.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 4, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 513 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, who is still at Moush, reporting upon the present situation at that place, and containing an account of the fight which took place at Derkevank, a village about 3 miles from Moush, on the 19th ultimo, resulting in the deaths of several villagers and in the capture of one wounded insurgent, who stated that he was a Russian non-commissioned officer.

In connection with that portion of Mr. Heathcote's despatch in which he gives a list of the demands of the Sasun refugees, it may be as well to state that Mr. Heathcote would not appear to have fully grasped the meaning of the instructions sent to him, and which were duly reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 459 of the 14th ultimo. What I desired to ascertain was the nature of the representations and demands which he and his colleagues had addressed to the Turkish officials. It would obviously be beyond my power to satisfy the mere wishes of the inhabitants of Sasun such as he describes them.

I think that it may safely be assumed from the general drift of Mr. Heathcote's present despatch that the Grand Vizier has kept the promises made to me, as reported to your Lordship from time to time in previous despatches, and that up to the present no evidence is forthcoming to show that the Kurds have interfered. It may also, I think, be inferred that the recent trouble has been caused by an insurrectionary movement which has had its origin from outside the Turkish dominions, though planned and executed by refugees from Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR

Inclosure in No. 121.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 28.)

Moush, June 22, 1904.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 27 of the 15th June, I have the honour to report that on the following day I had a long conversation with the Vali with regard to the present condition of the province, and the necessity of putting a stop to the excesses daily reported to me.

I noticed a very marked change in Ferid Bey's attitude towards me, and found that, instead of simply denying the truth of all reports that reached me, he appeared genuinely anxious to persuade me that the versions brought to him by his officers were correct. He had lately received telegrams from the Porte, sent in consequence of the representations made by your Excellency and the French Ambassador, and complained bitterly that our reports against him, based on insufficient evidence, were making his position very difficult. At that moment an official entered, and, in reply to inquiries about a Kurdish raid said to have occurred at the village of Dadzsgom, stated that there was no such place, and that nothing whatever had happened in the direction I indicated. I thereupon asked how I could be expected to believe so evident and so clumsy an attempt to deceive me. I should add that it was admitted that the village is called in Kurdish Dazikom, that something had occurred there, but that the local authorities were not yet in possession of details.

Owing to the difficulty to which I referred last week of obtaining trustworthy information, or any actual evidence to bring before a Court or even the administrative authorities, I have been obliged to lay the most stress on some of the less important cases reported to me, but such cases may have their value as tests of the good or bad faith of the Vali and his officials.

The following are, so far, the visible results of the Vali's change of attitude:—

(*a.*) The distribution of bread to the refugees, which had been very irregular and insufficient, has been greatly improved.

(*b.*) A certain Kasim, accused of murdering the priest of the large Catholic village of Freuk Norshen, has been imprisoned.

(*c.*) A second inquiry has been ordered into the affair at Arakh mentioned in my last despatch, the Governor-General admitting that the first official report cannot be regarded as finally proved.

(*d.*) No buildings were burnt in the fight at Derkevank to which I refer below.

I think Ferid Bey now sees that it is at least not politic to allow the state of affairs which has lately prevailed to continue, compelling us to report that no effort is being made to act justly; and there is, of course, great force in his contention that it is impossible in a few weeks, and in presence of an active revolutionary movement, to undo all the harm that has been done in seventeen years of misgovernment since the vilayet was established.

I cannot as yet say whether the Vali's promises and protestations are based on a sincere determination to do his duty impartially, but I think that at the least he will

endeavour to improve the existing conditions in order to avoid further difficulty with the Sublime Porte.

On the same day M. Robin informed Ferid Bey that he heard of threats against his life among the lower class of Moslems, and of a belief that his assassination would be welcome to the Government. The instructions which he obtained in consequence of his report on this to Constantinople, and which he received during one of our visits with evident satisfaction, ordering him to see that we were always escorted by gendarmes while outside Moush, will render it difficult to verify reports and complaints from villagers. M. Robin had on two occasions obtained valuable information which would have been less easy to get in the presence of gendarmes; in one case this information confirmed, and in the other it totally disproved, the peasants' statements.

Your Excellency has called on me for information as to the wishes of the Sasun refugees. On the 17th a deputation of them visited the French Consul, and they have also informed us in writing of their desires. These statements confirm my belief, which I have already reported, that with one or two exceptions they, like all mountaineers, are most unwilling to leave their homes even for better lands in the plain.

Their wishes, expressed in the form of demands, though as suppliant fugitives they are in no position to adopt this tone, are as follows:—

They claim the guarantee of the Great Powers for five points—

1. That they should be restored to their old homes in the mountains with full provision for the maintenance of order;

2. That their houses and churches should be rebuilt;

3. That the cattle and other property stolen should be restored;

4. That the nomad Kurdish tribes should be forbidden to enter their districts; and

5. That no barracks should be erected among them, on account of the misconduct to be expected from the soldiers, especially towards their women, who are obliged by their work to be often alone in the fields and on the hill-sides.

In case it should be finally decided to restore them to their homes, though this now seems improbable, I would remark that, unless some steps are taken in the direction of the second and third points, they would have the greatest difficulty in maintaining life. The fourth point has often been raised, and is essential to the real tranquillity of any Armenian population in Sasun; but its attainment seems difficult, as the tribes have visited the mountains for generations, perhaps for centuries, and cannot remain in the plains of Diarbekir after the pasturage is exhausted. The establishment of military centres and posts, if properly conducted, should reduce the dangers attending their arrival. The fifth point appears to me absurd. The Government can only secure order, in accordance with point 1, by this measure, and opposition to it is bound to give the authorities the idea that the villagers wish to recommence their revolutionary agitation on the first opportunity.

When the Public Prosecutor called on me, as reported last week, he stated that measures were already being taken for the establishment of two barracks and four permanent posts in the mountains.

He also told me that the Government had ordered the Vali to offer to the refugees the choice of returning home or accepting new land in the plain, and this was confirmed by the Governor in the long interview reported above. On the 17th your Excellency was so good as to inform me that the Porte promised to supply the money necessary for the rebuilding of the houses, in case of their accepting the first of these offers.

In view of the divergence between the demands of the refugees and the Vali's statements that most of them desired to be established in the plain, I suspect that some pressure was applied to induce the people to give this answer, and that, when that failed, the Central Government was persuaded to order the adoption of that course. However this may be, when I saw the Vali on the 18th, he produced a telegram, which I think, from words used by him, must have reached him before our former meeting, and which was almost certainly dispatched before the promise of funds for rebuilding was made to your Excellency.

He said that this telegram was an Iradé, dated the 15th, coming direct from the Palace, and ordering that the refugees and surrendered insurgents should be established in the plain, and steps are now being taken to execute this order.

Your Excellency alone can judge whether the promise of the Porte was given in

good faith, but I feel almost sure that Ferid Bey concealed from me the later instructions he had received.

Whatever decision may finally be taken by His Majesty the Sultan, I would submit that it is of pressing importance to settle this question without delay. It is still possible, if seed can be provided, to raise a crop of millet, but if much time elapses the people will be in danger of starvation unless the Government distribution of bread is continued, and once they are in the villages, I should have no hope of this.

On Sunday, the 19th, at 1 o'clock we heard that fighting was going on at Derkevank, a village 3 miles from Moush on the road to Bitlis and at the foot of the hills. The Russian Consul and I started at once, in view of your Excellency's instructions to me, which I had made known to him. M. Robin was prevented from accompanying us by a slight indisposition.

When we arrived we found about 200 infantry, a small body of cavalry, and many gendarmes, most of whom were preparing to return to Moush.

The villagers say that the gendarmes attacked them first, while the account given by the officials is that they had dismounted to rest at the fountain, which is near the road below the village, when they were fired on from among the houses and from the hill above.

There is no doubt that there was at least one real insurgent in Derkevank, a wounded man, who had been hidden there for some days; he was captured and brought to hospital in Moush, and, according to the Vali, he has declared himself to be an officer of Russian reserves.

We saw eight corpses and two wounded men and one young boy, all of whom were identified by their relatives as villagers; and though the officials assert that they were armed, we think this is false, and that they were merely trying to escape into the fields for safety.

Fourteen bodies were buried yesterday, including four natives of the neighbouring village of Arakh.

Captain Tyrrell, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, joined us at the village when he reached it on his road from Van to Moush. He concurs with me and M. Chirkoff in thinking that the officers commanding the troops and gendarmes were responsible for allowing innocent villagers to be killed.

These officers were Mir Alai Yaver Bey, Colonel of Infantry (32nd Regiment), and Izzet Bey, the Colonel (Alai Beyi) of the Bitlis Gendarmerie. As regards the former, it must be admitted that, according to some accounts, the regular troops did not arrive till the fighting was over, and, in that case, the whole responsibility falls on Izzet Bey, whose dismissal I should urge were it not that the Colonel of the Moush gendarmes and the Major at Bitlis, one of whom would presumably succeed him for a time, have an even worse reputation. Constant complaints are made against him, but I have no positive evidence of the misdeeds attributed to him.

Whether there were, or were not, any other insurgents come from the mountains besides the alleged Russian, none were killed or captured, and so far nothing in the nature of evidence has been produced to show that the official version is correct.

There was no burning of houses and no plunder by Kurds, though the villagers accuse the gendarmes of looting, and the Vali, whom we saw sitting at the entrance to Moush, says that he ordered the arrest of several natives of the town who were hurrying out armed in order to take part in what might be going on.

Be this as it may, the Moslems of Moush did not go to Derkevank, as they are said to have gone to Honan, and as they certainly went to Mogunk when it was destroyed two years ago.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 122.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 534.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 4, 1904.*

WITH reference to the recent despatches which I have addressed to your Lordship upon the subject of the Armenian revolutionary movement, I have the honour to

transmit herewith copies of two despatches from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting upon a fight in the neighbourhood of Arjish which would appear to have resulted in the complete annihilation of a small band of thirty Armenian revolutionaries by Turkish gendarmes, assisted by Zilan Kurds.

Your Lordship will perceive that Captain Tyrrell reports in his earlier despatch that, in addition to the thirty men killed at Arjish, seven armed revolutionaries, of whom three were Turkish military deserters have been captured in Karchikan, and that he is of opinion, after sifting all the information he has been able to procure, that all these men formed part of the same band of refugees who had fled from the Susun district.

He also states that the local officials believe these men to have come originally from Bulgaria, and says that their behaviour in allowing themselves to be led into a trap by a Kurdish guide would seem to show that they were not natives of the country.

I am authorizing Captain Tyrrell, in answer to the inquiry contained in the last paragraph of his later despatch, to proceed at once and without waiting for permission from the Embassy to any place where an incident as the affair at Arjish may seem to call for his presence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 122.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Van, June 10, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report another affair, in which it seems that a band of thirty Armenian revolutionists has been wiped out.

This occurred in the hills north-east of Arjish, between that place and the Tujji Yaila.

As soon as the news was received in Van that this band had been located, and was being held by the Zilan Kurds, the Alai Bey left, with a small force of gendarmerie These restored confidence at Arjish, where the threatening behaviour of the Kurds had caused some apprehension; and then, with some soldiers proceeded to the spot where the revolutionists, surrounded, were defending themselves.

I have seen the telegraphic report sent by the Alai Bey to the Vali, giving an account of the matter. According to this, all the thirty revolutionists were killed, after having refused terms of surrender. It seems that the Kurds lost about an equal number, while one soldiers was killed, and two wounded. The band was apparently at bay in a cave, and by some mischance, some dynamite which they had with them, exploded, killing fourteen of them, as well as six Kurds who were trying to get at them from above.

Such of their rifles and other belongings as escaped the effects of this explosion, are described in the Alai Bey's report; and there is a banner inscribed "Ya ulum ya azad" —death or freedom.

I hope to see these things in a few days when the Alai Bey returns to Van.

About the same time that the news of this band reached Van, seven armed revolutionists were captured in Karchikan. Of these, three were Turkish soldiers deserters, one being a sergeant-trumpeter. Those seven men are now in prison in Van. Towards the end of May a band had landed on the Island of Charpanakh (Gaduiz), in the lake. Soldiers were sent out there, but, as usual, arrived after the revolutionists had left. The statements of "eye-witnesses," in recounting the descent of this band upon the island, differ, in estimating its numbers, between fifteen and forty. The revolutionists passed the night there, picketing the monastery, so as to allow no one to go out, and keeping all the boatmen prisoners. They represented that they had come from Sasun, that there had been no fighting there, but only in Moush Plain. They said that they had killed 300 soldiers, but that their own losses were insignificant; also that among the revolutionists are many Turkish soldiers who have deserted. From the examination of the seven men taken in Karchikan, it seems that both they, and those who were killed north of Arjish, were of this band. They crossed from Charpanakh to Arjish, where they divided, the larger part going north, and meeting their fate as described above, and these seven crossing to the south shore.

There are vague reports among the Armenians of other bands being in various parts of the vilayet. But I think these reports spring from the habit the Armenians here have of exaggerating and of frightening themselves unnecessarily. The Government seems to know nothing of them, and the only report to which I am inclined to assign a basis of fact is the one that says there is a small band in the Shattakh district, consisting of revolutionists who had been hiding in Van itself.

There is much conflicting opinion as to whence these bands come. While some say that they are fresh from Russia, and that more are continually crossing; others put them all down as refugees from Sasun. I think the latter supposition is the more probable, and it would certainly seem to have been the case in regard to the band whose destruction I have reported. It ought, too, to be no easy matter for revolutionists, armed and well supplied as these bands generally are, to cross the frontier, and wander across the country to Van; but then the police is so undermanned and inefficient, that one could not be altogether surprised at this happening. The officials believe that the particular band which has formed the subject of this despatch consisted of men from Bulgaria, and that it had originally come in connection with some Macedonian revolutionary Committee. At all events, it would seem not to have contained men of this locality, for men who know the country round here would never have allowed themselves to be led, by a Kurdish guide, as these were, into a *cul-de-sac* from which there was no escape.

In Van itself I think the general situation has improved since I reported on it early in April in my No. 10. The Vali has shown that he intends to keep the Kurds well in hand, as also the soldiers and zaptiehs employed on the occasions of these affrays; and at present the authorities, civil and military, seem to me to be acting coolly and correctly, and to have no intention of allowing disturbances to arise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL,
Captain.

Inclosure 2 in No. 122.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 26.)
Sir, *Van, June 14, 1904.*

WITH reference to my No. 24 of the 10th June, I have the honour to report that I have had a conversation with the Alai Bey and seen the articles which had belonged to the revolutionary band, which he had collected and brought into Van.

These are not of much importance. Among them is a silk banner, bearing on one side the figures 1904 and the words "Pashnag Society," in Armenian characters; and on the other a device, with the motto, also in Armenian, "Death or Freedom." Another piece of embroidered silk, apparently for a pendant of some sort, has the words, "A.R.F. Committee, 1810." There are six medallions, two of which bear the portrait of Sirop.

There are three spherical iron balls, supposed to be dynamite bombs, and a very good Kodak camera of the most recent type.

Only two old rifles have been brought in, the rest having been given to the Kurds as a reward for their action in the affair. The cartridges are of Russian make. There are a good many papers, but these have not yet been examined.

The statements of the Alai Bey bear out the particulars reported in my above-mentioned despatch.

At the same time, it must be said that there is now a different version from Armenian sources. According to this, there were only nineteen revolutionists, of whom seven escaped into Alashgha, the balance of the thirty corpses being those of villagers killed by the Kurds. There may be some truth in this, but, on the whole, as far as one can judge, I think the balance of fact is on the side of the official report. Whether any villagers were killed or not, I am pretty certain that, in this case, no revolutionists escaped.

As it is practically impossible to get at the whole truth of these affairs, and to know exactly what has happened, without being on the spot oneself, I should like to ask your Excellency to allow me to, in future, go out myself as soon as news of similar occurrences are received, and without waiting for a formal sanction in each case. For, unless I could start immediately, it would not be of much use going at

all. I should not leave Van if I thought, at the time, that my presence was needed here. Besides the advantage of seeing with my own eyes, and having all information at first hand, the fact of a Consul being present, or even expected, would tend to prevent harshness towards inoffensive villagers and to restrain the Kurds.

In connection with the Arjish affair there were evidently good grounds for the apprehension which I mentioned as having existed there before the arrival of the Alai Bey. The Kurds were on the point of attacking the place and looting the bazaar.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL,
Captain.

No. 123.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 530.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 5, 1904.*

I TRANSMIT herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting a severe fight between a band of insurgents and the Imperial troops in the neighbourhood of Kutch.

The band, who had, shortly before, crossed the Russian frontier, apparently without any impediment on the part of the military guard, were almost exterminated by the Turks, and only three survived and recrossed the frontier.

It seems hard to believe that the Russian Government is unable to prevent these incursions into the neighbouring country, but, whatever may be the worth of Prince Galitzin's statement that he cannot guard such a long and mountainous frontier, he ought to have no difficulty in suppressing insurrectionary meetings such as are reported by the Turkish Government to have almost openly taken place at Kars and other places.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 123.

Acting Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 42.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, June 24, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to submit the following Report on a trip to the frontier which I made with the French Dragoman Acting Vice-Consul, who was going to meet his chief returning from leave of absence.

My primary object was to talk over several cases of Kurdish oppression of Armenian villagers with Ahmed Pasha, Commander of the frontier, and with Halil Effendi, Commandant of the troops at Kutch.

I am glad to say I was successful in causing drastic measures to be taken in two cases which had dragged on for several weeks.

A very short time after our arrival at Kutch on Sunday evening, a man came in from Medjingaird, a village an hour and a-half distant up the line, with the news that heavy firing was going on, and soon afterwards the bugle sounded for reinforcements.

The garrison at Kutch consisted till lately of some three squadrons of cavalry, but was joined some six weeks ago by the 4th Battalion of the 26th Regiment (Binbashi Khoulousi Bey) which is dispersed in the different frontier villages of the Passin and Nantivan Kaimakamliks. The system of patrols on the line is bad, or rather there is no system nor any co-operation between the Turks and the Russians. The latter have patrols of about twenty, covering a distance of 2 kilom., one each side of a fixed centre. The former have patrols of fifteen men and an officer, covering some 5 kilom., with no centre or time limit. The consequence is that not only do the patrols each side of the line not cover half the ground they might do, but the Turkish patrols frequently overlap each other, leaving whole kilometres uncovered.

Halil Effendi answered the summons for reinforcements at once with all the troops in the immediate vicinity, some 120 men, foot and horse. He was back,

however, in a short time with the news that the patrol had let the band slip through and lost track of it. The Armenians, most of whom were mounted, seem to have treated the fire of the Turks with supreme contempt, returning it but never stopping or diverging from their route.

The firing had, however, roused the two neighbouring villages, both of them inhabited by Reshid Bey's Hamidiehs. This forced the band to make a long détour, and prevented its getting to Zanzac, a mixed village of some fifty houses, four-fifths Armenian, which, I have very little doubt from what I heard from Armenians at Karaourgan, the Russian frontier post, the band wished to reach, and if possible destroy, trusting to the press to attribute the deed to the Kurds.

Cut off as it was from the main road and from retreat, and hemmed in by Moslem villages, with men and beasts tired out, the band stopped and took up a very strong position, about one hour and a-half's direct ride from Kutch, on the three highest peaks of the Zevin Valley, at the point where Moukhtar Pasha inflicted terrible loss on the Russians in 1878.

In the meantime villagers had discovered their tracks and the troops were quickly on the road. Cavalry reinforcements were sent from as far as Azap, three hours distant, and made up a total of 120 soldiers, of whom some 80 were infantry. The fight lasted twelve hours, and the infantry charged on five distinct occasions, showing great courage. Halil Effendi, himself a cavalry man, admitted that they did far better work than his own troops.

It was the latter, however, who finally put the band to rout by taking them unexpectedly in the rear.

The Armenians fought with desperate courage to the end, making some good shooting at long range, but completely losing their heads at the last attack. One officer told me it was pitiful to see the men wildly emptying their magazines at the soldiers without taking any kind of aim and at the last moment picking up turf and stones to throw at them. No quarter was given, nor could I discover that any was asked.

The affair made a deep impression on both the troops and the population. Among the officers I could discover no trace of bitterness against the unfortunate men who had so uselessly sacrificed their lives, but among them and among the Turks in the neighbouring villages I heard nothing but imprecations against a Government which had driven the Armenians to such a pass.

One old Turk said to me, with tears in his eyes: "We lived so quietly together before. Now they let the Kurds ruin both them and us. They were so young and strong, and they made such a hopeless effort."

The number of which the band was composed is uncertain. But forty-five is probably correct. Thirty-three were killed on the hill and in the neighbouring valleys or water-courses, four were found dead yesterday morning on the frontier, five were captured severely wounded on Tuesday near the River Araxes, and three escaped back to Russia. The population maintains that some got through into the Plain of Passin, but I doubt it.

The Turks lost one officer killed, and the Major commanding the infantry battalion wounded, probably fatally; four men killed, another officer and some fifteen wounded, of whom two will probably succumb.

The Kurds inhabiting a small village, Asha Horom, at about 2 kilom. distance from the hill occupied by the band, amused themselves by firing off their rifles in that direction. They received an unexpected and unwelcome response, which cost them three in killed and seven in wounded. Otherwise the Kurds were held severely in check, and Reshid Bey's Hamidiehs would not have come, I believe, even if they had been called, so anxious were they for the safety of their own villages.

A regrettable feature was the slaughter of some thirty horses, which had been left by the Fedai in a very much exposed place. Only three were saved, two of them being very fine animals.

The troops must have fired an enormous number of rounds, unless they sold some of their cartridges to the villagers; 16,000 were served out to the infantry alone, and from hearsay I should judge that 30,000 were blazed away. Certainly none came back to Kutch.

The Fedai were also well provided. After firing recklessly for twelve hours they still had a great quantity in reserve. A large number of dynamite bombs were thrown, damaging only one soldier, a sergeant, whose leg was blown away. They also carried dynamite in packets.

I unfortunately did not consider myself justified in assisting at the fight on Monday. Halil Effendi received orders to dissuade me, if possible, but if I insisted he was to

give me an escort of a strength which would have seriously diminished the fighting force.

The French Dragoman and I walked over the ground, however, next day, and it was fairly clear that had not the Armenians been exhausted by their long night march, nor made the initial mistake, born, I think, of their desire to fight and die together, of concentrating at the approach of the troops on the main peak and leaving some rocks three-quarters the way up unoccupied, thus affording the troops invaluable shelter, the losses of these latter would have been infinitely greater, and most of the band might have escaped at nightfall.

The long-range shooting of the soldiers must have been fairly bad; of the forty or forty-five Armenians composing the band, only three were killed on the summit, the rest being shot at very close quarters when they broke.

The troops sustained all their losses, on the other hand, while trying to reach the rocks mentioned above.

The burying of the corpses was most improperly done, and I made very strong representations on the subject to Ahmed Pasha, who promised to issue the necessary orders.

We saw seven to bury which no attempt had been made, and others were all more or less above ground. They were all naked, and one, I regret to say, had been mutilated in the manner usually attributed to the Moslem Bashi-Bazouks, as also to the Bulgarian Komitas. Both the stripping and the mutilation of the corpses was the work of the Kurds.

Large bands are reported in the woods in the neighbourhood of Kutch, and troops, to the number of 500, have been hurried up from all sides.

(Confidential.)

I was very much struck with the behaviour of the Russian officials and the manner in which they took the crossing of the Fedai. They treated the whole affair as a huge joke and made no pretence of having really tried to prevent it. The Director of the Customs, who is also Civil Commandant of the frontier, told me that the bands were composed only of men who had emigrated from Turkey and that he had asked some "que je savais se préparer pour passer en Turquie," what their object was, and that they had answered that they wished to kill as many Turks as possible in revenge for the death of a father, brother, or other relation.

There is, so far as I can judge from my conversation with him and from the general tone of the officials when talking of the passing of the bands, absolutely no doubt that not the least serious effort is made to stop them. Even if their official excuse that they cannot stop every hole in the hedge were true, they could with the greatest ease prevent the gathering of the bands in the villages and their organization at Kars.

In my opinion there is serious danger of a reckless outburst on the part of the Turkish officers charged with the supervision of the frontier. The irritation against the Russians, and the rapidly growing contempt of their fighting powers, as seen in the Extreme East, combine to render the position at Kutch a very delicate one.

The Director of Customs read me a letter hastily scribbled by Halil Effendi as he was starting for the fight, in which the latter accused him directly, and in so many words, of having known of the organization of the band and of having facilitated its passage.

On the other hand, Ahmed Pasha affirmed that in the house of a certain Armenian at Karaourgan there are six wounded, and has officially informed the Government in that town. I believe him to be mistaken. I saw one of the refugees leaving the place on Tuesday, and had there been any wounded I think I should have heard of them.

The country through which I passed struck me, on my way to Kutch, as being perfectly quiet. The villagers, both Turkish and Armenian, appeared to be satisfied that the local Government was really trying to keep a check on the Kurds, and the presence of the troops, against whom I heard no complaints, has had a very reassuring effect.

On the way back I found, of course, considerable anxiety, owing to the withdrawal of the troops from the villages; but in every case it was not so much from the Armenian revolutionaries as from the Kurds that the Turks feared trouble. The troops have, however, I believe, been replaced by now, and I do not think that, even if fresh bands cross, they will seriously affect the tranquillity of the country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 124.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 541.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 6, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from the Acting Consul at Erzeroum reporting that an arrangement has been made between the Turkish and Russian Governments by which any one, Christian or Moslem, provided with a "carte d'identité" can enter Turkey from the Caucasus and return thither without any time-limit being fixed.

Mr. Shipley adds that the old system remains in force as far as the Turkish side of the frontier is concerned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 124.

Acting Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 41.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, June* 24, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that by a new arrangement between the Turkish and Russian Governments any one, Christian or Moslem, provided with a "carte d'identité" can enter Turkey from the Caucasus and return thither, no time-limit having been fixed.

The giving or withholding of the permit is left to the discretion of the General Commanding the Russian frontier.

The old system will continue on this side of the frontier, and no permits will be issued by the Turkish Government.

The military authorities strenuously opposed the measure, but their objections were overridden by the Porte and the Vali, who maintained that the risks were more than compensated by the greater freedom of communication and consequent benefits to the province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 125.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 263.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 13, 1904.

THE Turkish Ambassador informed me to-day that he was instructed to call my attention to the proceedings of a meeting of the "International Eastern Question Association," reported in the "Times" of the 2nd instant. The meeting had been attended by several Members of Parliament and also by a number of foreigners. The language used with regard to the Grand Vizier and the Sultan had been most offensive. The Sultan, in particular, had been referred to by an Italian gentleman present as "the fiend incarnate at Yildiz, who would long ago have been swept from the face of the earth were it not for the contemptible jealousies of Europe." Munurus Pasha considered that His Majesty's Government might well take some steps to restrain such exhibitions, and asked me whether it was not possible for me to do so.

I told him that I could not take upon myself to say whether the conduct of the persons who had taken part in these meetings had been in any respects illegal. It seemed to me, however, obvious that even if their conduct was of a kind which the law did not permit, it would in the interests of the Sultan himself be most inexpedient to give importance to their proceedings by a public prosecution. If proceedings were to be instituted, I imagined that the defence would set itself to work to justify the statements which had been made as to the character and conduct of the Sultan and his officials. The results could scarcely fail to be deplorable.

His Excellency told me that he had often used these arguments. He showed some anxiety that I should make you aware of the fact that he had carried out his instructions, probably with the hope that, if the Sultan should mention the matter to you, you would dwell upon the difficulty of meeting His Majesty's wishes.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 125*.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 544.)
(Cypher despatch.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, July* 9, 1904.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 115 of the 7th instant, no confirmation of murders or danger of massacre in the Vilayet of Van has reached me, and I consider that we should take with reserve the statements of the pro-Armenian Committee. It is possible, however, that this rumour may be based on an incident reported by His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van in his despatch No. 21 of the 10th instant.

The following telegram reached me from Captain Tyrrell yesterday:—

"In accordance with your Excellency's telegram of the 10th June I have visited the disturbed district, and have returned thence.

"The authorities placed no difficulties in my way, but I was not able to visit Kurd Sassun; there were, however, only two Armenian villages there.

"Investigation was difficult, as military operations were over long before I arrived and no inhabitants remained.

"As to points mentioned in your telegram of the 10th ultimo, it is impossible to compute actual loss of life without reliable statistics of population before and after events.

"For Akshaser Valley I estimate 900. The inhabitants of Talori are believed to be hidden pending resettlement; consequently there are very few refugees. Operations against these districts were directed from Diarbekir. There was probably less loss of life on the Moush side.

"I believe that, considering all the circumstances, it would probably be difficult to sustain charge of massacre and atrocities. It is true that I found corpses of women and children, but doubtless many of these deaths were due to the severity of the weather and exposure.

"The participation of the Kurds has not been established, and there is no doubt that the orders received were against this.

"The villages destroyed amount to thirty-four, but it is doubtful whether the insurgents themselves did not do this.

"Refugees have returned to Ghelieguzu, Shenig, Semal, and the six villages of Shattakh, and all is now quiet. The inhabitants of Talori and the Akshaser Valley were still absent, but an official has been sent to resettle them in their homes.

"At present a force of six battalions, with four guns, is encamped in these districts and barracks are being built.

"Should the local authorities loyally carry out their orders the villages should be restocked and the people settled before the winter.

"It will probably be advisable that a Consular officer should visit Talori side, with a view to seeing whether any steps are being taken for resettlement there. I could undertake this, and visit the Caza of Sassun at the same time, if you think it necessary; but the journey to Talori is a difficult one. Otherwise I should prefer returning to Van vià Bulanik, as there were reports of trouble there some time ago."

In accordance with Captain Tyrrell's suggestion I have authorized him to visit Talori and Sassun, provided this can be done without personal risk or danger to himself, and to return to Van by Bulanik, as desired by him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 120*.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July 17.*)

(No. 118.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, July 17, 1904.*

I HAVE received the following telegram from Mr. Heathcote at Moush under date of the 16th July :—

"No. 38. On Friday night the greater portion of Bitlis bazaar was destroyed by fire, and I have received telegraphic news from a reliable source that reservists and others were guilty of much looting. I have no details as to the origin of the fire, but rumour points to its having been accidental."

I think Mr. Heathcote should return to Bitlis without delay, and I have telegraphed to him to that effect.

At the present moment there is no foreign Consul there, and a good effect will be created by his presence.

No. 126.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 261.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 15, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 490, relative to the state of affairs in the Lebanon and the attitude of the Governor-General, Monzaffer Pasha.

I concur in your Excellency's view that it is necessary to act with great caution at the present moment with regard to the complaints made against Monzaffer Pasha, and I approve the language which you held to the Grand Vizier as to the special position occupied by the Lebanon Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 127.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July 18.*)

(No. 546.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 11, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting upon the present situation in the neighbourhood of Moush and the return of the Armenian refugees from Sassun to their villages.

It is to be presumed that Mr. Heathcote's Report is chiefly based upon information he has gathered from the refugees and other Armenians at Moush, and it may be as well, therefore, to take it with some reserve until fuller particulars are received. Your Lordship will notice that his estimate of the number of persons killed does not at all tally with that given by Captain Tyrrell in his despatch No. 26 of the 14th ultimo, which was forwarded in copy to your Lordship in my despatch No. 534 of the 4th instant.

Although we may consequently have reasonable ground for hoping that the loss of life has not been so great as is conjectured by Mr. Heathcote, his despatch proves that a lamentable state of disorder exists, and that it has been marked by many deeds of violence committed both by the insurgents themselves and by the troops operating against them. No proof, however, is afforded that the Kurds participated in the disorders, and Captain Tyrrell reports that he has found no trace of their presence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 127.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 29.)
Sir, *Moush, June 29, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that since the date of my last despatch, No. 28 of the 22nd June, the continuous series of excesses reported from all parts of the plain appears for the moment at least to have ceased, and in the course of a week I have only heard of one murder. This, as well as one previous crime of the same nature, is probably the work of a certain Hadji Faris, who has long had the reputation of being one of the most lawless Kurds of the eastern part of the Moush plain. Kasim, who, as I have already reported, is in prison on the charge of killing the priest of Khasheni, is his nephew, and the more recent crime is attributed to his son Hasan, whose arrest the Vali promises. We are urging that measures should be taken to restrain the violence of Hadji Faris himself, who is almost certainly the instigator of these offences.

The Vali now admits that he has been deceived by his agents in some cases, and that some of the incidents brought by us to his notice, and denied at the time, have really occurred.

There appears to be some ground for hoping that the period of unbridled licence which followed the military operations in Sassun is at last coming to an end, and that some effort will now be made to punish criminals. Several villages have lately been searched for insurgents without any of the excesses always reported before on these occasions.

The Vali has lately caused to be deported to Bitlis a member of the Administrative Council of Moush named Khalil Effendi, who has long been notorious for his fanaticism and for abuses committed in connection with the farming of the tithes. I trust that he may ultimately be sent further than Bitlis, where he will find too many kindred spirits.

On the 22nd instant it was rumoured that a new order had been received from Constantinople to the effect that the refugees and surrendered insurgents were to be allowed to return to their former homes; this was officially confirmed the next day, and on the 25th all except a very few of these people were dispatched to the mountain. The Mutessarif of Moush went the same day to supervise the settlement in the nearer parts of the district, Shenik, Dapig, &c., which belong to this sandjak. He was accompanied by an Armenian member of the Moush Council of Administration. The total number of persons here was about 6,000—1,200 men who had surrendered and 4,500 women and children. There are now only a few sick persons left. Some families had already been removed to the plain in pursuance of the earlier Iradé, and I will endeavour to ascertain their desires and their prospects of obtaining them.

I am told that a small quantity of grain was taken, but in the last few days complaints have reached me that, instead of food, the Government has been distributing 10 paras (one halfpenny) a-head a-day; and as it is understood that there is no food in the district, this sum, which would at any time be inadequate, is now quite useless.

As to the present state of Sassun and its neighbourhood and the prospects of any harvest being reaped [*sic*], but hope to receive news from Captain Tyrrell, who left Moush on the 23rd, going first to Dapig, near Semal, where he heard that Salih Pasha then was, and where, as I am informed, the building of barracks has been begun.

In the course of a recent conversation with the Vali, I asked what had become of the cattle that had belonged to the mountaineers; his answer was, "The people are rebels," and when I pressed the matter, asking whether the animals had therefore been confiscated to the State, or whether they had been stolen by the soldiers or the Kurds, he could only say that they had perished, energetically denying the participation of Kurds. As a matter of fact, I imagine that most of the beasts are in the neighbouring Kurdish villages, though I hear that some were brought to Moush and sold here, and some sent towards Erzeroum.

As I have before reported, Zeid Bey regards all the men of Sassun as active rebels who have surrendered and asked for pardon, and from this point of view it is not surprising that he should take little interest in the question of their cattle; but the total disappearance of the flocks and herds of nearly forty villages would demand some explanation if the Government desired to act with justice and humanity; but in that case it would also be necessary to inquire into the fate of a large proportion of the population also.

I have not access here to any of the printed or other reports giving an estimate of the former numbers of the inhabitants, but to the best of my recollection they amounted to well over 12,000 in 1894, and are not likely to have diminished since, in view of the prolific character of the Armenian race.

According to all Armenian accounts which are not denied by the officials, 37 villages are now empty, and as less than 6,000 men, women, and children were in Moush, and the number wandering in the mountains cannot be large, it must be supposed that the native estimate of 4,000 killed is not greatly exaggerated.

I have just heard from Captain Tyrrell at Goliguzan that the villages which he has seen are entirely denuded, not only of their inhabitants, but of everything—food, furniture, and utensils—though a fair number of houses are undestroyed. Except at Dapig, where troops are stationed, he has seen neither Armenians nor Kurds, and from his account it is absolutely necessary to provide food for the returning population. We have represented this to the Vali, who has promised to take the necessary measures.

The Governor-General is beginning to speak of returning to Bitlis before very long, and as evidence that the authorities are beginning to expect the return of normal conditions, I may mention the fact that Sami Bey, Inspector of Justice for the vilayets of Van and Bitlis, is about to return to Van, his usual residence. I am not aware that his presence here during the late troubles has had any effect whatever, though he has a good reputation, for it is only quite recently that the administrative authorities have begun to refer murders and other crimes to the Law Courts.

I inclose a list of crimes and excesses reported from the plain during the last two months.

Insurgents appear to have been present and to have opposed the troops or

gendarmes in the cases numbered 1, 4, 19, and 30, but it is not proved that they fired the houses, and most unlikely that they encumbered their flight with loot.

It will be observed that the practical cessation of outrages after the 17th June corresponds in point of time with the Vali's change of attitude towards us, and with the inquiries and instructions which he received from his superiors at the instance of your Excellency and the French Ambassador.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 127.

List of Crimes and Excesses in Moush Plain, &c., May and June 1904.

From Armenian Sources.

No.	Date.	Place.	Remarks.
1	April 28.. ..	Pertag	1½ hours east of Moush. Fight with insurgents—four Armenians killed, fourteen houses burnt, church pillaged, village plundered.
2	May 6	Alourinj	2½ hours east of Moush. A woman abducted by three Turks of Khinis.
3	„ 17	Solenkh	Western part of plain. Rapes and pillage by soldiers.
4	„ 18	Mgrkom	Eastern end of plain. Attack by troops and gendarmes; most of the houses burnt; much plunder, including the church furniture, which the French Consul saw offered for sale by soldiers the next day at Khaskeui. The villagers told him that the Kurds had been invited by the officer to join the troops. Eight Armenians killed.
5	„ 19	Dormirt	Near Mgrkom (No. 4). Similar incident. A few houses burnt; three persons killed; plunder.
6	„ 19	Alfgloun, Khaskeui, Tirouk and Irishag	In same neighbourhood. Seven murders.
7	„ 25	Boulanik Plain	News received of excesses in the Boulanik Plain. A priest, four heads of villages, and seven villagers killed in various places.
8	„ 25	Derik	Near Euphrates Bridge, north of Moush. Kurdish cattle raid; resistance met by burning and looting. Officially attributed to insurgents, though this seems unlikely, north of the river.
9	„ 28	Arakelotzvank (Arakh Monastir)	3 hours east of Moush, in the hills overlooking the plain. Four refugees killed.
10	„ 29	Abulbular	West of Moush. Kurdish raid. One death and some plunder.
11	„ 30	Mezre	In lower hills south-east of Moush. Seven villagers returning with wood from the mountains killed. Vali paid no attention, it is said, to the petitions of their widows.
12	„ 31	Acinjvank	1 hour north-east of Moush. Robberies by soldiers.
		Dzajna	Near the last. Robberies by soldiers.

No.	Date.	Place.	Remarks.
13	May 31	Khars	North-eastern corner of plain. Search for arms by Alai Beyi and alleged cruelty and torture.
14	June 2	Tzronk	North-east of plain. Same as last (No. 13), but thirty weapons were found.
15	„ 3	Shemlug	Centre of plain, near Khuskeui. Yusuf Aga seizes Armenian houses.
16	„ 4	Pazou	Near Surp Garabed. North-west of Moush. Raid by men of Colonel of Hamidie Ibrahim Bey, of the Jibrauli tribe. Head of village and two others killed. The Colonel wished to settle his son in the village. The Vali said the murderers had been arrested, but this was not the case.
17	„ 5	Nachadak	A man and two women killed by Kurds.
18	„ 6–8 ..	Sheikh Yusuf and other villages	3 hours north of Moush. Searches for arms by Alai Beyi, with much cruelty. Same village, one man killed.
19	„ 6	Geravon or Kunvi	North-east of plain. Alai Beyi, after a fight where seven insurgents were killed, allows plunder.
20	„ 7	Aghjan and Asbaken ..	North of Moush. Four men killed; the latter two by gendarmes.
21	„ 7	Komer	(See No. 30.) 3 hours west of Moush. Surrounded and fired at; seven men killed; houses plundered.
22	„ 8	Alijan	3 hours north-east of Moush. Search by Captain Azmiut Bey and ninety gendarmes; three men tortured. (See also No. 25.)
23	„ 8	Postalsiant	On border of Moush and Boulanik Cazas; five men killed.
24	„ 8	Moush and neighbouring village of Garni	Great violence to compel refugees to go to Garni. They refused because the distribution of bread even in Moush was at this time very irregular. Two children killed; one woman died latter from injuries received.
25	„ 10	Alijan	(See No. 22.) Search by Cherkess Ali Bey of the Civanaim "Soyyaré" Gendarmes; alleged tortures. Perhaps this is the same incident as No. 22.
26	„ 10–12 ..	Garni	(See No. 24.) Five or more surrendered Armenians wounded.
27	„ 12	Arakh	2 hours east of Moush. Kurd attack; one man killed, two children perished among the four houses burnt. Official account: The man, with thirteen other insurgents, attacked soldiers. The death of the children denied. Later the Vali admitted some doubt, and ordered the arrest of Yusuf Aga and two others for murder. The Armenian version seems correct.
28	„ 12	Tovnik (north) and Khars ..	Tovnik (north) and Khars, east of Moush Plain. Two murders.
29	„ 12	Khesdeni	In centre of plain. Priest killed. Kasim, nephew of Hadji Faris, has been arrested. (See my despatches.)

No.	Date.	Place.	Remarks.
30	June 13	Komer	(See No. 21.) Attacked by Alai Bey of Moush; many houses burnt; much plunder. Official account: Insurgents burnt the houses and attacked the troops. Plunder denied. There seems to have been certainly insurgents there. Later the Vali admitted some doubt as to the conduct of the troops.
31	„ 13	Dadregom, or Dazikom ..	Near the last. Similar incident. Existence of village denied at first by Vali, but he admitted his error.
32	„ 14	Belel	Near the last. Plundered by gendarmes.
33	„ 14	Pogrgov	West of Moush. Head of village murdered.
34	„ 14	Khronk	Near last. The head of Shenik (in Saesun), who had taken refuge there, killed by Almanji Boujo.
35	„ 15	Achkan	A man stabbed.
36	„ 16	Aurogh	North-west of Moush. Two killed and three wounded by Badikan Kurds while returning home from Moush.
37	„ 17	Derkevank	1 hour from Moush. (See despatch No. 28 of the 22nd June.) Fight in which fourteen villagers were killed and no insurgents killed or captured, except one wounded man.
38	„ 17	Alizman	2 hours east of Moush. One man killed.
39	„ 19	Havadvorik	2 hours east of Moush. One man killed by soldiers.
40	„ 25	Alvarinj	2½ hours east of Moush. One man killed by son of Hadji Faris. (See No. 27 and my despatch.)

(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Moush, June 29, 1904.

No. 128.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 550.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July 11, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 537 of the 5th July relative to the discontent prevalent in the Turkish army, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting on a mutiny of time-expired soldiers which occurred recently in that town.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 128.

Consul Richards to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 32.)

Sir, *Damascus, June 27, 1904.*

I HAD the honour to report to your Excellency by telegraph on the 22nd instant that a number of time-expired soldiers had assembled in the Omeiyade (generally known as the "Great") mosque which they had refused to leave, in spite of the earnest personal remonstrances of the Mushir and the Vali, until they received their

discharge papers and, it was stated by some, their arrears of pay; that their numbers were put at 200, and that a great many Moslem civilians were fraternizing with them and supplying them with food.

The movement began late in the evening of the 20th instant when some 30 soldiers went to the mosque, followed later on by 50 or 60 of their comrades.

These men belonged to the conscription of the year 1313 (1897), and, therefore, their term of service expired a year ago. The Mushir (Hakki Pasha), as soon as he was informed of what had happened, went off at once to the mosque accompanied by several officers, and was about to enter the building itself, having traversed the court-yard, when a sentry placed at the door refused to allow him to pass, using, it is said, the word "yassak" (forbidden) in a loud and peremptory tone. Thereupon the Mushir began to parley with the men from the door, using at first the language of persuasion and exhortation, and when that failed to have any effect, that of grave rebuke and even menace. I hear that in the heat of the argument he even raised his cane to one of his interlocutors, who, however, grasped it and thrust it back, telling the General in no gentle tones to keep quiet.

I hear that one of the mutineers reproached him bitterly for his life of physical ease and enjoyment, while they had not only received no pay for years, but were even being stinted of their rations. The Vali then appeared on the scene and spoke to the men quietly and earnestly, trying to induce them to return to their duty, but with no more success than the Mushir. The latter being by this time thoroughly roused expressed his determination to have the mutineers expelled from the mosque by force, employing the Redifs, now garrisoning the city, for that purpose. The Vali, however, pointed out to him the impolicy of, not to say the serious risk attending, a recourse to violence, and finally induced his companion to withdraw and report the matter to Constantinople, with an urgent request for instructions. They then withdrew, leaving the men to their own devices.

Early on the following day the Mushir reported the matter by telegraph to the Minister for War, from whom he received instructions towards the evening ordering him to give the mutineers—for although the men had used no actual violence towards their officers their conduct would appear to merit the use of this term—their discharge papers, and, it was stated on good authority at the time, ten months' pay. By this time many more of their comrades had joined the mutineers, so that on the morning of the 22nd instant their numbers were put by most people frequenting the mosque at 200, although some persons of whom inquiries were made thought that there were not more than 150. The Moslem population of the city in general, and more especially that of the quarter where the mosque is situated, appears to have been deeply moved by this incident, which excited their sympathies in favour of the soldiers, to such an extent that not only did they commence to flock to the mosque in large numbers, where they talked with the men kindly and encouragingly, but they began to supply them with large quantities of food, of which, indeed, there was no stint during the whole of the time—five days—that the men remained in the mosque. It should be noted, too, that some of the best-known Moslems here gave expression to their sympathy with the mutineers in this very practical fashion. Several attempts were made by the military authorities in the course of the week to induce the men to leave the mosque and come to the barracks for their discharge papers, but they insisted that they should be given to them there, as well as the arrears of pay which had been promised them. I should state that although, so far as I can learn, the order from Constantinople mentioned ten months' pay as the amount which should be given to the men, it had been decided here that two months' pay would be sufficient. It is such a common occurrence for time-expired soldiers to be discharged without any pay at all, that the mutineers insisted chiefly on their release from service without entertaining any serious hope that any pay would be forthcoming.

On Saturday evening some of the men received their papers and pay and left the mosque, followed by the rest of their comrades on the following day. And so the incident, which at one time seemed not unlikely to have serious consequences, came to a quiet and satisfactory termination, as reported to your Excellency by telegraph on the 27th instant.

I should state that the mutineers, who belonged in part to the cavalry and in part to the artillery stationed here, are said to have been moved to take the—in this country—most unusual and extreme step above described, by the knowledge that large numbers of soldiers who belonged to the same year of enrolment as themselves had returned to Damascus from Constantinople and elsewhere after completing their term of service. They very naturally could not see why they should be retained with

the colours under the most aggravating circumstances of insufficient rations of the most inferior description, while their comrades were being discharged. It is also stated, though with what amount of truth your Excellency is probably better informed from another quarter, that the men had heard of the successful issue of a similar manœuvre executed by troops stationed in the Hejaz—Jeddah is mentioned, and that they thought they could not do better than follow their example.

The incident in itself is only so far important in that it illustrates the existing temper of Ottoman troops, more especially when it is remembered that similar acts of insubordination have not been infrequent of late, as I personally have had occasion to bring to your Excellency's notice more than once.

The authorities were perhaps wise, under the circumstances, to yield, but it is a dangerous precedent, as I fear they will discover before long.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 129.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 553.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 11, 1901.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 517 of the 28th ultimo, respecting the passage by insurgents of the Turco-Russian frontier, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that His Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum reports that his Russian colleague has stated to several official people in that town that the Russian frontier posts of the second line have been brought up into the first line, in order to fill up the gaps, and that the passage of bands is now therefore absolutely impossible.

Mr. Shipley adds that, as this is the third time since his arrival in Erzeroum that the Russian Consul-General has given the same assurance, he trusts the facts may prove to be as stated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 130.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 556.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, July 12, 1901.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting-Consul at Jeddah, inclosing a report on the economic and administrative State of the Hedjaz.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 130.

Report by Acting Consul Husain on the Economic and Administrative State of Hedjaz for the four months, January to April, 1901.

DURING the first two months of the year the State of Hedjaz continued to be very much disturbed, the roads were very unsafe, and the pilgrims, who arrived this year in large numbers, had to accommodate themselves with all sorts of blackmail, extortion, and robberies. Thirty-seven claims for indemnities for robberies committed on the Jeddah-Mecca road in January and February were received in the Consulate, out of which thirty-two were for robberies of merchandize and five for personal losses of the pilgrims. I believe a large number of pilgrims suffered losses in this manner, but either they were so busy with the performance of their religious duties that they had no time to resort to the Consulate for indemnity, or they did not consider it worth while to apply and get a very small percentage of the actual losses, after waiting for several months. Disturbed state of Hedjaz.

Cutting telegraph line.

Upsetting postal arrangements.

Tribal fights.

The turbulence of the Bedouins had increased to such an extent in the beginning of this year that for about two months it was impossible to keep the telegraphic communication between Jeddah and Mecca open, the wire was always cut as soon as it was repaired. The unsatisfactory postal arrangements that we have here were still more upset through the increased insecurity of the roads, and once when I was at Mecca I was unable to send a letter to Jeddah for more than a week.

On the 30th January, when the big Medina caravan of about 10,000 camels was ready to start from Mecca, a quarrel took place between the two tribes of the Bedouins in the caravan itself, and the result was that, after exchanging shots for two hours, the Bedouins dispersed with their camels, and the pilgrims had to go back to the town. Again, on the 29th February, a fight took place between the Hodel and the Harb tribes in the streets of Mecca, when the pilgrims were coming into the town from Mina. The firing continued for more than three hours, and six of the Harbs and two of the Hodels were killed and more than thirty from both sides were wounded. Four Algerian pilgrims and one Indian child were also hit by misdirected bullets. The tribes had taken two hills and more fighting was expected, but Shereef Ali Bey, the nephew of the Grand Shereef, who has great influence over the Bedouins, intervened at the request of the Vali, and the two tribes quitted the hills and departed. The result of the first disturbance was the prevention of the Medina caravan, and of the second scarcity of camels after the Haj for the returning pilgrims to bring them down to Jeddah. The roads between Yembo and Medina, and Mecca and Taif, were also in the same state of insecurity.

Piracy.

It was not only on land that the Bedouins were active in depredations, the sea routes also between Jeddah and Confudah on the south, and Jeddah and Towal on the north, were infested by pirates. Two large sambouks, loaded with merchandize going from Jeddah, were looted by the pirates of the Davi Hasan tribe between Leeth and Confudah in February, and when the Turkish patrol steamer "Shawket Nama" attacked the pirates they fired on her, and after a fight of two hours the gun-boat, having three men wounded and run short of ammunition, had to retire.

Another daring attempt was made by the pirates of Towal to seize and carry away a loaded lighter from the Jeddah harbour, but the lighter having gone ashore their effort met with partial success, and they cleared out with some sacks of rice and a liberated slave from the grounded sambouk. The authorities have not taken any steps to punish the culprits and put down this state of things, and the sea between Confudah and Towal continues to be as dangerous as ever, and the trade between Jeddah and Confudah, which is carried on by sailing boats, is at a standstill.

Pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage this year was much bigger than those of many previous years, the number of arrivals by sea being 73,000. It was also noted for the visit of some important personages, as Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal, the head Mullah of the Bohra community of India, Atabuk-i-Azam, the ex-Grand Vizier of Persia, and the ex-War Minister of Morocco.

The caravan of the Begum was attacked both when going from Yembo to Medina and when returning to Mecca with the Syrian Mahmal, notwithstanding large escort of regular troops and artillery. The caravans of the Atabuk-i-Azam and the Mullah were also attacked on the Jeddah road. The caravan of the Egyptian Mahmal was threatened on the Jeddah–Mecca road, though no actual attack took place, but an Egyptian soldier was shot dead at Mecca, and the difficulties which this caravan met with at Yembo when going to Medina have already been fully reported.

I was myself attacked and blackmailed on the Medina road, and the Persian Consul-General had a narrow escape from a very severe attack on the Mecca road by taking refuge in one of the roadside guard-houses.

After the disturbance on the 30th January, mentioned above, no time was left to make fresh arrangements to bring together 10,000 camels again to start the Medina caravan, and so most of the pilgrims were prevented from visiting Medina, and the worst was that all the intending pilgrims had paid camel hire in advance, at the rate of 40 to 45 majeedi dollars per camel, and it was not known how they were to get any satisfaction for that. It was rumoured that the Motawifs will be compelled to refund the money, but this was known to be impossible, as half the money, which was the actual camel hire, was paid to the camelmen who had left Mecca, and there was no chance of obtaining satisfaction from them, and the remaining half was divided among the persons in authority who had to deal with it, the Motawifs getting 1 or 2 majeedis per camel as their share.

To wipe off the blame of not sending a caravan to Medina before the Haj, with the most strenuous efforts the Vali and the Grand Shereef succeeded to send, almost by

compulsion, about 2,500 Javanese, Malays, and a small number of Bengalis. These pilgrims had to perform a continuous journey from Mecca to Medina and back, stopping at the latter place for a few hours only.

During my visit to Mecca, on making verbal representations to the Vali and the Grand Shereef to indemnify the pilgrims who had paid the Medina camel hire and were prevented from the journey for want of camels, the latter gave orders that those who will visit Medina after the Haj shall be provided with camels without any further payment, and those that had given up the idea could sell their right to other pilgrims intending to go. Those who will not be able either to go or transfer their right were to get camels free of charge for the journey between Mecca and Arafat, and also from Mecca to Jeddah. The arrangement was not quite satisfactory, but, thinking that something was better than nothing, I agreed to it. Very few complaints were received after this; in most cases the pilgrims had come to some sort of arrangement through their Motawifs. The after Haj overland Medina caravan also could not leave Mecca this year on account of the disturbed state of the country, and a small number of pilgrims, who made up their minds to travel overland, notwithstanding the dangers, accompanied the Syrian caravan. The rest of the pilgrims visited Medina viâ Jeddah–Yembo and Jeddah–Rabuk.

Jeddah–Mecca road after the Haj.

Large numbers of troops having been stationed along the Jeddah–Mecca road after the Haj it became safe for day travelling, but travelling at night was still out of the question; also sending of large numbers of troops to Medina gave rise to rumours among the Bedouins that the Government was preparing an expedition against them, and thus, being frightened, they began to keep out of the way in the latter part of March and the whole of April.

The rains also attracted them towards the south to seek pasturage for their camels and sheep, and thus temporary peace was secured for the country between Jeddah and Mecca.

Health of Hedjaz.

Though there has been a mild epidemic of small-pox for the last six months in Jeddah, Mecca, and the interior, but no dangerous illness, like plague or cholera, visited the country, and the pilgrimage passed off without any serious loss of life.

Rainfall and water supply.

The continuous drought for some years has killed the greater number of camels and sheep of the country for want of fodder and water, and severe famine conditions prevail among the Bedouins. Heavy rains fell this year in March and April in the south-eastern part of Hedjaz, and also towards Medina, but none was received between Mecca and Jeddah and Jeddah and Yembo. Great difficulty was experienced by the pilgrims for water at Yembo, where they had to pay as much as 1 majeedi for a small skinful, and at Jeddah, though the conditions were not so bad; but the water supply is getting worse day by day. Whatever water is brought now from the surface wells at 3 or 4 miles distance from the town is brackish, but the people, in the absence of any endeavours from the authorities to ameliorate the condition, are obliged to use it. The officials and the Consuls, and many of the notables of the town, have to beg their water from the ships calling at this port, and this state of things has been going on for many months.

Departure of the pilgrims.

No attempt was made this year to sell steamer tickets at Mecca. But as usual for the last few years the steamers for the Mediterranean and Black Sea ports were pooled together, and the earnings, after deducting large sums for the local bakshishes, were divided among the steamers. The passage rates were 5 Turkish liras for the ports of the Syrian coast, six for Constantinople, and ten for the Russian port of Odessa, but the average paid to steamers per pilgrim was less than 3 liras.

Some of the pilgrim ships for India and Persian Gulf were also pooled by the agents, and the rates in the beginning were 60 rupees, but they gradually went down to 30 rupees; and after half of the pilgrims had gone, competition ensued between the shipping Companies, and the rates at once went down to 10 rupees and 8 rupees, and at the end I was able to send away 1,750 Indian destitutes gratis. Steam-ship "Ashruf" carried 1,100 and steam-ship "Mansoori" 650; and these pilgrims, being without means to support themselves during the voyage, were supplied with food for fourteen days from the Indian Pilgrim Jubilee Relief Fund of this Consulate.

Trade.

The trade in general, and especially in food-stuffs, has been brisk during the four months under report, but the insecurity of the roads and the robberies must have curtailed the profits of many of the merchants.

The import of food-stuffs has been rather in excess of the demand, and the market at Jeddah is overcrowded, to which the stoppage of trade between Jeddah and Confudah, owing to the dangerous state of the sea route, contributes to a great extent.

Administration.

The Commission of Inquiry, composed of two civil and two military officers, sent to Medina has been carrying on its work since its arrival at Medina, and more than eighty persons have been arrested, having been found guilty in one way or the other.

The late Mohafiz of Medina, Hasan Mazhar Pasha, has been sent to Taif, where he will stay without any work. Since the arrival of his Excellency the Vali at Jeddah the Grand Shereef has been acting for him at Mecca. No other notable change in the administration of the vilayet has taken place worth mentioning, but the Kaïmkam of Jeddah, Ali Yumni Bey, who is not on good terms with the Grand Shereef, having tried in vain for the last two years to obtain leave to visit Constantinople, appears to have been driven to a state of exasperation, and it is quite possible that some day he may leave this post without leave and take a ship to Constantinople, as his predecessor Jamal Bey did.

Financial state.

The Vilayet of Hedjaz, which mostly depends upon the monetary help from outside, had lately been very hard up in its money matters. Besides other embarrassments, the increased number of troops now in Hedjaz has been very hardly taxing the resources of the vilayet, and the Vali finds it a very difficult task to provide the troops with the ordinary rations, and to obtain the supplies he has to wax hard his promises and threats with the merchants, who have arrears of 10,000*l.* to 15,000*l.* only in Jeddah to receive from the Government for the prices of the food-stuffs.

Health of the Grand Shereef.

His Highness Aun-ur-Rafik Pasha is getting weak day by day, and is almost reduced to a skeleton. His temper has become peevish and behaviour quite sullen, and he often appears sleepy and drowsy. These signs show that the end is approaching, and it is time that his successor may be decided upon.

Disturbances in Nejd.

News was received some time ago of a severe defeat given to Bin Rashid of Nejd by the Wahabi Chief, Bin Saood, and that he had taken three or four important towns as well.

It was first reported that Bin Rashid had retired to the hills, but later on it was found that he had escaped and gone to Bagdad, where he had been able to obtain military help from the Turkish Government. It is reported that 3,000 troops, with one or two batteries of artillery, are sent with him against Bin Saood. It was rumoured here that some of the troops sent to Medina were intended to be sent to Nejd, and it appears that it was proposed, but for some reason these troops were not moved, and instead they were sent from Bagdad. It is also rumoured that some more troops have been sent from Damascus by rail to Ma'an, thence to proceed to Nejd, but the news has not been confirmed.

It has also been reported that forty cases of small arms and ammunition, which were sent for Bin Saood from Koweit, were seized by the Bedouins and did not reach their destination.

The family of Bassams has been removed from Hail to Riad by Bin Saood, and some members of the family, who reside here as traders, applied to the Grand Shereef to write to Bin Saood to send the Bassam family to Hedjaz, and his Highness, having acceded to their request, has written to Bin Saood and requested him to do so.

Jeddah Health office.

The present Sanitary Inspector of Jeddah, Dr. Delpino, though a good-hearted and well-behaved officer, often has given cause for dissatisfaction by creating unnecessary difficulties for the shipping, through his inexperience, wavering judgment, and want of administrative courage. His head clerk, who is a mischievous sort of man, and often, I believe, leads the inspector to draw wrong conclusions when consulted, has created a general hatred towards himself of all the people who have to deal with the sanitary office.

(Signed) S. MOHAMMAD HUSAIN.

Jeddah, June 17, 1904.

No. 131.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 557.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, July* 12, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting the projected building of a fort at Akaba.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 131.

Consul Richards to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 33.)

Sir, *Damascus, June* 28, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that Colonel Izzet Bey, an officer who formerly commanded the 26th Regiment of Cavalry, but who is now employed on the staff of this Army Corps, and was recently appointed Assistant ("Mu'avin") to the Mushir Ryazim Pasha, the Inspector-General of the Hedjaz Railway Construction Works, has just returned from Akaba, where, I am informed on good authority, he has been engaged in drawing up plans for the construction of a fortified post at the head of the Gulf. Izzet Bey's absence from Damascus for nearly two months had become somewhat a puzzle to me, although I heard vaguely from time to time that he was in the Hauran. The matter is now explained. He is undoubtedly an able man, a fair draughtsman, with a good practical knowledge of military engineering. He spent two or three years in Germany (he speaks German fluently), where he was attached to a cavalry regiment. When he came here, about six years ago, he was under a cloud, being suspected of strong "Young Turk" proclivities, and, in fact, it was stated at the time, he was considered to be in honourable "exile."

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 132.

Sir N. O'Conor to The Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 558.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 12, 1904.

I COMMUNICATED to the Grand Vizier yesterday the substance of Captain Tyrrell's telegraphic report of his visit to the Ak-Dagher Valley and the Talori district, which I had the honour to forward to your Lordship in my telegraphic despatch No. 544 of the 9th instant.

His Highness took notes of the statements made therein, particularly in respect to the estimated loss of life, and said he would ask for further detailed reports from the authorities.

I also drew his attention to information which I had received from Erzeroum, and which seemed to be confirmed by His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Mousb, that the cattle of the Armenian population had been stolen and distributed among the Moslems, who had sold many of them in the neighbouring markets at absurdly low prices. There was little use, I said, in reinstating the inhabitants in their homes if they had neither seed to sow or cattle to plough their lands, and I earnestly implored his Highness to do all in his power for the discovery and restoration of the cattle to their rightful owners. There was no doubt that the animals had disappeared, and the denials of the charge which his Highness stated had been telegraphed by the Valis of Erzeroum, Van, Bitlis, and Kharput did not alter the fact that the cattle were missing, and that the inhabitants must suffer great misery unless they were restored. His Highness said he would telegraph at once to the local authorities to take all possible steps to find out what had become of the cattle and to restore them to the people.

His Highness went on to speak of the result of the inquiries which had followed the

seizure of various documents in the possession of insurgents who had been either killed or wounded during the late outbreak. There was no doubt in his mind that there was an extensive conspiracy on foot which had been planned and devised on Russian territory.

Among the number of prisoners was a Russian officer of the reserves who had been captured at Derkevank, and from him they had obtained much valuable information, the report of which had just been received, and would be open to inspection by the Dragoman precisely in the state in which it reached the Porte.

I said that I feared there would be no great improvement in the condition of affairs in those regions as long as the present radical vice of gross misgovernment continued to render the life of every Armenian unendurable. His Highness would give me credit for not wishing to malign the Ottoman Government, but, as a matter of fact, I did not remember talking to a single person who had lived in these parts or spent any time there who did not report that the brutalities, injustice, and corruption of most of the petty local officials rendered the life of the inhabitants well nigh intolerable, and made them only too ready to join in any insurrectionary movement that offered the least chance of relief. Let his Highness, if he could, correct these abuses, appoint capable and honest officials throughout the country, assess taxation according to the means of the people, protect the peaceful inhabitants, and offer to all even a modicum of security, and I undertook to say most confidently that the country would be very soon restored to a state of prosperity and tranquillity which would be a relief to the whole Empire, and a new and most favourable factor in the political situation.

His Highness agreed in all this, and especially in a remark I had made that where the Ottoman official authorities were honest and intelligent men the country was quie and prosperous; but he shrugged his shoulders, and gave me to understand that the appointments did not unfortunately depend upon him or on the Porte.

His Highness added that he had just received information from a high-placed official stating that he had heard a report from Etchmiazin to the effect that within a week there would be an extensive and dangerous revolutionary Armenian outbreak in the Caucasus.

His Highness did not know the exact importance to attach to this information, but he had thought it prudent to considerably strengthen the frontier guard lest the insurgents should attempt to carry the movement into Turkey and renew the insurrectionary movement which had just been suppressed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 133.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 566.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 13, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 533 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush reported to me some time ago that the reinstatement of the refugees from the Sassun Mountains in their homes are likely to be seriously impeded by the Vali's appointment of an incompetent official to supervise the operations.

I lost no time in bringing the matter to the notice of the Grand Vizier, and have now pleasure in stating that in consequence of instructions sent to the Vali by his Highness the first appointment has been cancelled and a satisfactory official substituted, under whose supervision the reinstallation of the refugees in their homes would appear to be proceeding satisfactorily.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 134.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 271.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 20, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 544 of the 9th instant relative to the state of affairs in the various districts of Armenia.

I approve the instructions which you have given to Captain Tyrrell with regard to his proposal to visit Talori and Sassun and to return viâ Bulalik.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 135.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 272.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 20, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 534 of the 4th instant relative to the encounter which took place at Arjish between Armenian revolutionaries and Turkish gendarmes assisted by Zitau Kurds.

I approve the instructions which you have given to Captain Tyrrell to proceed at once without waiting for special permission to any place where an incident of a similar nature may seem to call for his presence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 136.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 273.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 21, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 558 of the 12th instant recording the conversation which you had with the Grand Vizier on the subject of the state of affairs in Armenia.

I approve the language which you held to His Highness on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 137.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 274.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 21, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 566 of the 13th instant relative to the arrangements for the reinstatement in their homes of the refugees from the Sassun Mountains.

I have learnt with satisfaction of the successful result of your representations which have led to the appointment of a satisfactory official to supervise the operations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 138.

Sir C. Hardinge to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 359.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, July 10, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that it is announced to-day that at Adjikend, in Russian Armenia, M. Audreeff, the officer administering the Provincial Government, was shot at and killed in broad daylight, close to his official residence, and within 30 yards of a band which was playing to the public. The murderer escaped. The crime is attributed to the Armenians, two of whom have been arrested, one of them a Persian subject from Tabreez.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES HARDINGE.

No. 139.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 579. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 19, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 566 of the 13th instant, and to previous correspondence upon the subject of the recent disturbances in the Sassun and Moush districts, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of three despatches from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Moush.

In the first of these despatches Mr. Heathcote reports that the condition of affairs in the neighbourhood of Moush has materially improved, and that the Turkish authorities are genuinely endeavouring to relieve the immediate wants of the refugees who have returned to their homes, that a suitable official has been appointed to supervise the work of reinstalling the refugees in their villages, and that the Vali has promised that the arrest of a notorious Kurd, named Hadji Faris, and some other malefactors, accused of murder and other crimes, shall be effected.

An inquiry at the Porte as to how matters are progressing in the disturbed district has elicited an answer that the Vali reports that the inhabitants are gradually withdrawing large quantities of grain, household property, and other effects from pits and other hiding-places in which they had concealed them before abandoning their homes. That the villagers should have taken such action in the hopes of safeguarding their property before fleeing from their homes would seem but natural. The Vali, however, states that he considers this as an additional proof of the general participation of the inhabitants in a deliberately-planned insurrectionary movement.

I would beg to call your Lordship's attention to the curiously-engrained belief, as shown in Mr. Heathcote's despatch No. 31, of the Turkish officials that the insurgents are in communication with British officials, whilst your Lordship will notice that Mr. Heathcote reports his Russian colleague's attitude to have been singularly apathetic.

I am also informed by the Porte that the Vali of Erzeroum states that Armenak, one of the leaders of the insurrection, has been captured, after having been slightly wounded in the leg, at Diadin, near the Persian frontier. It was previously stated that this man had been killed in the fighting which took place near Gheliguzan early in May.

I learn from Erzeroum that it was officially stated there, on the 16th instant, that fighting was being carried on with a band of fifty Armenians who had crossed into Bayezid on the 14th instant, that another band fifty strong had been repulsed at Narman on the 15th with loss, and that a Russian detachment was stated to be engaged with them, and that there is a large concentration of Armenian insurrectionaries on the Turco-Persian frontier near Van.

Acting under the instructions which, as I have already informed your Lordship by telegraph, I had sent him, Mr. Heathcote has now returned to Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 139.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 30.)
Sir, *Moush, July 6, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that two murders have occurred in the Moush plain since the date of my despatch No. 29 of the 29th June, and that as there have only been three such crimes in more than a fortnight, it may be hoped that order, or what passes for order here, may have finally returned. In the mountain, too, all seems to be quiet, and I am happy to say that the local authorities are beginning to take measures to provide for the most urgent needs of the returned refugees—a first small consignment of millet for sowing having been dispatched on Monday night. The Vali assures me that arrangements have been made to send up 100 horse-loads of seed and supplies daily until all danger of starvation is at an end. This estimate is probably too optimistic, as the first departure was of only thirty animals instead of a 100, but I think the Governor-General intends to do what is absolutely necessary, if only in order to facilitate his return to Bitlis by enabling us to report that the immediate future of the people of Sassun is assured, and ourselves to return to our posts.

The work of repatriation and supply is needlessly complicated by maintaining the division of the districts affected between the Sanjaks of Moush and Genj, and early last week the Vali sent for a certain Khalil Effendi of Bitlis, with the intention of sending him to Pasur to do for the Genj districts, including Talori, &c., what the Mutessarif of Moush was doing for his own province.

This man was the landlord and protégé of the late Vali, and was sometimes employed by him as Acting Kaïmakam. On one occasion he was sent to Khizan, where his first act was to summon the Armenian village chiefs and to tell them that their presence was required by the Court at Bitlis, but that he could save them if they paid him money. In short, his misgovernment was so flagrant that even Husni Bey, indolent and indifferent as he was, was compelled to recall him in less than a week.

I represented these facts to the Vali, whose first reply was that they were probably true, but that he had no one else to send. At the same time I reported the case to your Excellency, and on my protesting again still more vigorously, he finally admitted that Khalil was totally unfit for a work that demands not only common honesty but a certain measure of humanity as well, and he has now dispatched Jerdet Bey, Kaïmakam of Melazgird, to the district in question as Acting Mutessarif of Genj, with orders to act in concert with the Governor of Moush. Jerdet Bey, who is a Cretan, was lately Kaïmakam of Kulp, the caza which includes Talori and Pasur, where some 1,200 refugees now are; he, therefore, knows the country, and when I met him at Melazgird last year he gave me the impression of an honest and capable man.

Last week the Vali had promised us an investigation into the charges of instigating various murders brought against Hadji Faris, holding out hopes of his arrest. Soon after the departure of my despatch under reference, in which this man is mentioned, we learnt that he had fled from his home at Shemlag, near Khaskeui, having evidently been warned of the steps being taken against him. M. Robin and I accordingly called on Ferid Bey to urge the point that the tranquillity of the province, which he professes to have at heart, can only be assured by prompt action against such men, as the punishment of a few Chiefs would soon intimidate minor criminals. We received the extraordinary reply that Hadji Faris had not been arrested because regular judicial proceedings were being taken against him. The conversation having turned to the subject of the cattle of the people of Sassun, Ferid Bey then put forward the still more astounding suggestion that the animals had been intrusted by the Armenians to their Kurdish neighbours. We naturally replied that we should believe this when the beasts were restored, and the Governor appears at last to have understood that we should not report that order was restored and the future of the mountaineers assured (which he very evidently desires) on the strength of such assertions only. At my next meeting with him I found that he was much more disposed to act reasonably, and that the measures described at the beginning of this despatch had been taken, while he declared that he would effect the arrest of Hadji Faris and some other Kurdish malefactors. As to the former I doubt his success, as the man appears to have taken refuge in the lawless district of Khuit, but the suggestion that the Vali cannot reach him there may lead to a serious effort being made to apprehend him.

The Vali has just dismissed the Commandant of the Moush Gendarmerie, Alai Beyi Yusuf Bey, who was probably responsible for the excesses committed at Komer on the 13th June, and also a Lieutenant of gendarmes.

I have just heard that on Tuesday night a second consignment of some 30 loads of supplies and seed were sent to the mountain.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 139.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 31. Confidential.)

Moush, July 6, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, according to the statement of my Dragoman, the Vali has twice in guarded language, and his aides-de-camp once more openly, offered him a large sum of money to induce him to show the hiding place of Autranig, the rebel leader.

I am told that Ferid Bey spoke as though the sum of £ T. 8,000 offered were a reward set on Autranig's head, but that the aides-de-camp made it quite clear that a bribe was intended.

I venture to bring this fact to your Excellency's notice, because it tends to show that the Governor-General really believes me to be in communication with the insurgent Chiefs, and I have reason to think that he holds the same absurd view with regard to my French colleagues also.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 139.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 32. Confidential.)

Moush, July 6, 1904.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 26 of the 15th June, reporting the arrival of M. Chirkoff, Russian Consul at Bitlis, your Excellency may perhaps have observed in my correspondence since that date more frequent references to common action with my French colleague than to steps taken by us all in concert. In fact, M. Chirkoff, while maintaining excellent personal relations with us, has appeared from the first to adopt an attitude of some reserve in official matters, showing little inclination for concerted action with us.

Considering this in connection with the long delay in his arrival, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he is acting under instructions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 140.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 583.)

Therapia, July 19, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 498 of the 28th ultimo, upon the subject of disturbances among the Kurdish tribes in the Diarbekir district, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith extract of a Report from His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo upon the general condition of the vilayet, with special reference to the disturbed state of the road between Aleppo and Diarbekir in consequence of the feud between Ibrahim Pasha and Khalil Bey, the latter of whom would appear to be shut up in Ourfa, where the inhabitants are living in deadly dread of Ibrahim Pasha, who has vowed vengeance on the Mutessarif for assisting Khalil Bey.

As it seems to me that the presence of Mr. Barnham at Ourfa would not only show the local authorities that any failure on their part to fulfil their duties and protect

the lives and property of peaceful inhabitants would be reported for representations in the proper quarter, but would also be calculated to inspire confidence among the Christian inhabitants, I have instructed him to proceed thither at a reasonably early date, should he not consider that there are any serious objections to his undertaking the journey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 140.

Report by Consul Barnham upon the Administration of the Aleppo Vilayet.

(Extract.)

THERE has been no change in the general administration. Medjid Bey is still Vali of Aleppo, and all proposals for his transfer have been dropped.

I have had occasion in previous Reports to refer to the scandal caused by the interference of his son, Nedjib Bey, in the affairs of the Government, and I have now to report that his conduct recently provoked a breach between the civil and military authorities, which has led to his removal from the vilayet. He will leave for Constantinople in a few days.

I have frequently heard the integrity of the Vali called in question in this sense that, although never known to have himself accepted an offering, his son did so on his behalf. Indeed the chief accusation which was made by the military authorities against his son was of so grave a nature as to seriously compromise the Vali's reputation. A Commissary of Police was recently dismissed because it transpired that he had systematically arrested people in the streets at night on some trivial charge, and released them on payment of sums varying from 1 to 4 dollars, that having thus arrested as many perhaps as thirty in one night, he would report the arrest of only three or four to the Vali next morning. This blackmail was divided between the Commissary of Police and the Vali's son, and as these proceedings had continued for a long period, the amount of money raised must have been considerable. Directly the matter came to light, the Commissary was sent away from Aleppo to Beyrout within twenty-four hours, and all inquiry into the matter was suppressed.

The command of the regular forces at Aleppo was this week taken over by Major-General Ismet Pasha. This officer has been associated with the Aleppo Vilayet for many years, but especially with good work done at Alexandretta where he constructed the present spacious barracks. He bears an excellent character.

The Ourfa district has been much disturbed during the past three weeks, and the road to Diarbekir is closed.

Khalil Bey, Chief of the Kara-Kechilis, being hotly pursued by Ibrahim Pasha, took refuge at Ourfa, where it is said he gave the Mutessarif 700*l.* to secure his help. The Mutessarif allowed him to enlist the Berazi Kourds from the Suroudj district, and he succeeded in raising a force of about 1,000 men, foot and horse, armed with spear and Martini. For some days this force lay encamped within sight of the city of Ourfa, and every day a battle was expected, when suddenly, without apparent reason, they were seen to strike their tents and return. Passing under the walls of Ourfa they fired shots by way of salute or defiance, and caused a nasty panic in the city. In explanation of this retreat, the authorities say that Ibrahim Pasha having retreated to a mountainous district, the Berazi men could not follow them as they are only accustomed to fight in the plains. Others say, and this version is more generally accepted, that Ibrahim Pasha paid the Berazi men to forsake Khalil Bey. There is, under the circumstances, some uneasiness at Ourfa, for Ibrahim Pasha is said to be in a dangerous mood and to have vowed vengeance against the Mutessarif, even if he has to take the city. The people of Ourfa must be excused if they are nervous, for they suffered terribly during the Armenian massacres, and this is the story told by persons who lived through those events. All other parts of the vilayet are tranquil.

The harvest, though unequal in distribution, has been on the whole good. The locusts, however, have done considerable damage to the green crops in this neighbourhood.

Excellent work has been done in improving the quality of the water-supply at Aleppo, by cleansing and widening the river channel, and by cleansing and roofing the aqueduct which brings the drinking water from Heilan, eight miles from the city.

(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Aleppo, July 1, 1904.

No. 141.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir H. M. Durand.

(No. 156.)

Foreign Office, July 27, 1904.

Sir,

THE American Ambassador left with me to-day the inclosed copy of a Memorial received by the Secretary of State from the Armenian Republican Club of New York. I told his Excellency that I would give him a summary of our latest information, and I have accordingly communicated to him a Memorandum, copy of which I transmit herewith.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 141.

Armenian Republican Club of New York to Mr. Hay.

New York, June 28, 1904.

Dear Sir,

THE Armenian citizens of New York join the Armenian Republican Club, of the city of New York, in solemn petition to your official management for aid in behalf of the tens of thousands of helpless men, women, and children who are being ruthlessly wiped out of existence under the barbarous passions of the savage, bloodthirsty Turk.

We cannot avoid the feeling that the Powers have been distinctly optimistic, if not unwittingly misled, in their policy for the suppression of this enormous wholesale slaughter of our people.

While we readily realize that there is no disposition to shirk humane obligations or wink at the outrage, we most earnestly implore your timely and serious consideration of the determined threat of Ottoman tyranny to exterminate the Armenian race—a threat that is being executed every day to its utmost import, and apparently under the indirect, if not direct, sanction of the Sultan and his coterie of wily advisers. Almost every mail brings us tidings of fresh massacres. We are appalled at the long continuance of this ghastly spectacle, and the long-interference tactics employed by our sister nations. The blood of our slain, as it reddens the native mountains and plains of Armenia, cries out to all the earth. Many of us here escaped years ago after witnessing the horror of seeing our fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, and friends beheaded and disemboweled and thrown to the vultures.

This gruesome carnival of rapine and bloodshed goes on unabated. To us the day seems very dark. The golden sun of modern civilization hides its face from us, but with full orb to every other people. No wonder we are despairing of help from our brothers in the flesh, while our mourning souls cry, "How long, oh God, how long!"

Several months ago the French Government notified the Powers that certain information indicated that Turkey was to take advantage of Russia's preoccupation with Japan, and on the 15th April last was to resume the wholesale annihilation of Armenians. The Powers issued a protest at once, but with what results? Only to fool the Powers for a few weeks' respite. The work of extermination is now begun, and is going on in earnest. Latest official advices tell us that already seventeen whole villages have been looted and burned, and their inhabitants slain. Consuls are being rushed forward from France, Britain, and Russia to the scene of slaughter.

We represent here more fugitives from the Ottoman persecutions than the aggregate of those in the above countries. We have become full-fledged American citizens as rapidly as the laws of our respective States would permit.

Our children at once become part and parcel of the great public school system. We dearly love our adopted country, and would yield our lives to support its unsurpassed laws and institutions; but we yearn in agonizing entreaty for our kin, who are every day being plunged to their death under the savage knife of the beastly, bloody Turk.

To the honourable authorities, therefore, of the Government, which we hold more sacred than any other on earth, and whose sterling integrity, noble impulses, and valorous deeds for humanity's cause are known to every clime, we appeal (1) that immediate influence be exerted by way of urging the Powers to prompt action against the vacillating policy of the Sultan, the artful pledges of his perfidious contingent, and the lying treacheries of the Rulers of the Armenian provinces; (2) that the Powers be admonished by the oft-repeated violation of faith and Treaty on part of the authorities of the Turkish Empire, and reminded that the only decisive course for quelling the bloody outbreaks and saving the remnant of the Armenian sufferers must come through the use of severe measures, and securing of a compact that will insure prompt and rigid enforcement.

Most respectfully,
(Signed) M. B. PAROUNAGIAN, *President.*
M. L. CHETEJIAN, *Secretary.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 141.

Memorandum for American Ambassador.

THE state of affairs in the Moush and Sassun districts of Armenia since the month of February has given cause for grave anxiety. A large number of villages have been destroyed, whether by Turks, Kurds, or insurgents it is difficult to decide; the loss of life has been considerable, and some 3,000 or 4,000 Armenians have been driven from the mountains and have taken refuge in Moush. The presence of the British, French, and Russian Consuls at Moush exercised a restraining effect upon the soldiery, and the Turkish Government are evidently alive to the necessity of showing their reprobation of the outrages which have occurred, and their determination to restrain the Kurds and to restore order and tranquillity.

The following decisions of the Council of Ministers were sanctioned by Imperial Iradé on the 21st June:—

1. That permission should be granted to the refugees at Moush and other places to return to their homes in Sassun.

2. That £T. 5,000 should be appropriated and sent to the Vali of Bitlis to assist the refugees in rebuilding their houses.

3. That barracks should be built in the neighbourhood of Sassun to protect the Armenians against the predatory raids of the Kurds, and to check any revolutionary outbreak at the beginning.

4. That a general amnesty should be granted to all those who surrendered and who were not caught in the actual commission of crime.

5. That an efficient gendarmerie should be reorganized in Bitlis and the neighbouring vilayets, and that an inquiry should be held into the mode and system of administration in order to check existing abuses.

Mr. Vice-Consul Heathcote, who is still at Moush, has reported in a despatch dated the 6th July that the condition of affairs has materially improved; that the Turkish authorities are endeavouring to relieve the immediate wants of the refugees who have returned to their homes; that a suitable official has been appointed to supervise the work of reinstating them in their villages, and that the Vali has promised that the arrest of a notorious Kurd and of several other malefactors shall be effected.

No. 142.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 279.)

Foreign Office, July 28, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 583 of the 19th instant inclosing extract of a report from His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo on the subject of the recent disturbances in the district of Diarbekir.

I approve the instructions which you have sent to Mr. Barnham to proceed to Ourfa at a reasonably early date, should he see no objection to undertaking the journey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 143.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 1.)

(No. 601.)
My Lord,

Therapia, July 26, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 579, Confidential, of the 19th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship, herewith, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice Consul at Bitlis, reporting that the dispatch of supplies to the refugees who have returned home continues on a scale which it is promised shall be improved shortly, and that the state of tranquillity already reported in the Moush district continues.

Mr. Heathcote regrets that the attitude of the Vali leads him to anticipate that he is conniving at the escape of Hadji Faris, who is at Khuit.

I took an occasion yesterday to impress upon the Porte that it is imperative that an abundance of supplies shall be furnished to the returned refugees, since a situation of the greatest misery and distress would be created should they be left unprovided for, their entire means of livelihood and subsistence having been destroyed during the recent troubles.

Mr. Lamb drew the Grand Vizier's attention, under my instructions, on the 10th instant, to the Kurd Hadji Faris, to whom reference is made in Mr. Heathcote's despatch, and represented the desirability of his arrest.

The Grand Vizier telegraphed the Embassy's complaint to the Vali of Bitlis, from whom he has now received a reply stating that the judicial authorities cannot ascertain that any previous conviction has been recorded against Hadji Faris, that his arrest under such circumstances would be contrary to justice and would excite the anger of his clan, that he had, however, intended to summon him administratively to Moush, but that the man had fled to his clan and taken hiding, in consequence of the Dragoman of the French Consulate having spread it abroad that he was about to be arrested.

The Vali, however, concludes his telegram by saying that a statement having been made that he had instigated the murder of an Armenian in the village of Shomlagh, a prosecution has been instituted against Hadji Faris in accordance with law.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 143.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 33.)
Sir,

Moush, July 13, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 30 of the 6th July, I have the honour to report that the sending of supplies and seed to the mountains has continued during the past week on about the scale indicated by the earlier departures. The Vali maintains that he will very shortly have a larger number of transport animals at his disposal, and that the work will then be completed in good time to enable the villagers to reap a crop this autumn.

The state of tranquillity already reported still continues, no crime having come to our knowledge this week.

I regret to say, however, that no effort is being made to arrest Hadji Faris, the Vali practically admitting that in Khuit he is out of reach, and it is quite clear that his promises that the man shall be taken when he ventures to return home cover a determination to connive at his escape.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 144.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 2.)

(No. 128.)
(Telegraphic.) P.

Constantinople, August 2, 1904.

I HAVE to-day received telegraphic information from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van that, on the 29th July, a serious conflict took place at Gravi, near Moush. Seventeen soldiers were killed. Subsequently the village of Sikavi was attacked by the troops and several of the inhabitants killed. Captain Tyrrell counted 27 corpses, among them being those of ten women.

There is, he adds, renewed activity among the insurgents, who are determined to force matters to a head.

No. 145.

Draft of a Memorial from Representatives of the Armenian Church to the King.
(Communicated by Mr. Chirol, August 3, 1904.)

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

THE Armenian Church, one of the oldest churches of the East adopted Christianity before other Eastern nations, and during the centuries her Kings and Pontiffs engaged in war against Mahommedanism and fire worship. After having lost her own independence our nation first opened the doors into the Far East with her commerce which extended from India to Amsterdam. The faithful of the Armenian Church have preserved intact the religion which they adopted at the time of the Apostles, and have preserved their language by God's grace. Our people remain to-day faithful to their belief, faithful to the suzerain nations. They endeavoured peaceably to progress to the extent that circumstances permitted in science and in the arts, in handicrafts, agriculture, commerce, and such public offices as their rulers intrusted to them. And to-day, on the threshold of the twentieth century of progress and liberty, our people in despair present their humble request to your Majesty by the feeble voice of their unhappy pastor and beg the intervention of your Majesty on behalf of the oppressed and unfortunate population of the Province of Armenia in Turkey.

Your Majesty's Government knows that at the Congress of Berlin the Armenian people raised its voice in protest against their oppressors, the Kurds, Turks, Tcherkesses. This voice was heard in 1878, before the Powers of Europe; I was then Archbishop and ex-Patriarch of Constantinople, delegated to the Congress and the first to protest against Ottoman rule, knowing from near at hand its acts of oppression, tyranny, and violation; I went throughout Europe, to France and England, Germany, Austria, and Italy, while my colleague, the Archbishop Khoremian Bey went to Russia where the Tsar Alexander II was still reigning. The Congress found our claims just and Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin was enacted.

May it please your Majesty, I do not wish to be tedious, but I cannot hide the reality of those things. During the last quarter of a century the state of our peaceful Armenians has become worse instead of better, and more wretched by heavier and heavier taxes, by numerous imprisonments and horrible tortures, by exile and extensive emigration. My people are diminished and worn out by repeated massacres, by forced conversion and by systematic barbarity. Children and youths are not spared, the innocence of young girls has been outraged, priests have been flayed; while the country has been reddened with the blood of old men, and the savings and property of an innocent people plundered. The sap of life and activity is dried up.

The worst thing is that the officials, soldiers, Kurds, and Tcherkesses let loose, are not satisfied with the massacres which they provoke and which, begun in 1815, lasted till 1896. Actually horrible massacres of the same kind were perpetrated in Sasun and Mush, in the Province of Bitlis, and they threaten to gradually overflow all the Armenian provinces. Your Majesty, I, as the chief of the Universal and Apostolic Armenian Church, and as spiritual father of the Armenian people scattered over the world, sharing the happiness of my children and their sufferings and martyrdom, and believing that the state of my people in Turkey is unbearable, and after having explained precisely and truthfully the sorrowful reality of the situation, I, humbly implore your Majesty, bent under the weight of my 85 years, to have

the supreme kindness to make heard the great protecting voice of humanitarian England to assure the welfare of my innocent people severely oppressed under the Mahommedan yoke.

I do not wish to seek either for the lost crown of Arsacedes or for the royal sceptre of Bagratides; nor do I wish to raise the standard of the lion surmounted by the Cross of the Rubenians, but humbly to request that lightening of the burden of taxation that weighs down a despoiled people; the free circulation of merchants in the interior of our provinces and abroad; the return of emigrants to their native country; the restitution of raided property; the pardon of prisoners; the right to protest against iniquities; the right of personal defence against savage Kurds, Teherkesses, Mahommedan fanatics, and finally that the Christian Powers may have new regulations under their control.

In order that this humble request should reach your Majesty, I have selected two worthy ecclesiastics, Mgr. Sarajian and Mgr. Ayvadian, Armenian Archbishops of America, India, and Persia. I earnestly hope, your Most Gracious Majesty, that my prayer may find a response in your Majesty's humanitarian feeling, and that thanks to the protection and intervention of your Majesty's powerful Government my sorrowful people will find a little peace and security for which I will remain grateful for ever.

I pray for the life of your Imperial Majesty.

This letter from His Holiness Catholicos, the Supreme Patriarch of the Armenian Church, is presented by his Delegates, the Archbishop of the Armenian Church in America, and the Archbishop of the Armenian Church in India and Persia, and Dr. Loris-Melikow. They seek an opportunity of seeing Lord Lansdowne in order to ask him to present it to His Majesty to whom it is addressed, for which purpose they hand you a copy of the letter in English, with very grateful thanks for your Excellency's kind offer to bring the matter before Lord Lansdowne. They have already seen President Loubet and M. Delcassé, and presented a similar letter.

(Care of Dr. Loris-Melikow, 68, Lancaster Gate, W.)

No. 146.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 291.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, August 3, 1904.*

THE Turkish Ambassador informed me to-day that the Porte had received a telegram from the Vali of Bitlis, reporting that Armenian brigands had attacked, at the village of Kravi, a detachment of soldiers sent from Moush to take over two pieces of artillery which had come from Trebizond. After killing twelve soldiers and wounding eight others, the brigands had set fire to the village, and had then fled to Aktchan, which they had also burned. They had, further, set fire to another village, situated an hour's journey distant from Kravi.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 147.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 8.)

(No. 610.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, July 30, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 491 of the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Jeddah on the subject of the recent mutiny of time-expired soldiers at Medina.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 147.

Acting Consul Hussein to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 62.)
Sir, *Jeddah, July 17, 1904.*

REFERRING to my despatch No. 59 of the 1st July, I have the honour to report that the time-expired soldiers at Medina who mutinied and went to the mosque, having been given their teskerehs, have returned to the barracks. Yesterday I received the information that all the time-expired soldiers at Medina will be sent to Jeddah, where they will receive their pay before embarking on board the ship to be sent to their country.

The mutinied soldiers who went to the mosque here are still staying there, and refuse to come out without receiving teskerehs and pay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MOHAMMED HUSSEIN.

No. 148.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 5.)

(No. 612.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August 1, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 514 of the 9th ultimo, in which I transmitted to your Lordship a copy of a Report received from Captain Tyrrell of a journey to the disturbed districts of Sasun and Moush, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith paraphrase of a telegram just received from Captain Tyrrell reporting a visit to Talory and Sasun, and containing additional information about the present state of the disturbed districts, and stating that the probable loss of life during the recent troubles was everywhere exaggerated.

I am forwarding this information to your Lordship with all possible dispatch, and shall have the honour to communicate a fuller report as soon as it is received from Captain Tyrrell.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 148.

Captain Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Moush, July 30, 1904.*

I HAVE to report my arrival here last night, the 29th instant.

In Sasun I collected 300 refugees from Talory, and on the 21st July handed them over to the Settlement officer. The number of refugees from Talory which have returned since then has risen to 700, and there was evidently great exaggeration everywhere in the numbers reported killed.

There has been an outbreak of small-pox among the Armenians hiding in Sasun due to overcrowding, but now that they are returning to their own villages this should improve.

I consider the progress of reinstatement is satisfactory; I again visited nearly every village which had been destroyed. Cattle are being restored and houses rebuilt, &c., and the Mutessarif of Moush and his subordinates are working energetically and well.

The building of barracks is necessary to prevent a recurrence of these disturbances, and complaints on this score are therefore unjustifiable. There is no doubt that practically all people were rebels.

There is news of fight in the plain four hours from here. I have been out there all day, and will report to-morrow. Dispatch of this telegram has been delayed in consequence of this.

No. 149.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 288.)
Foreign Office, August 5, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 601 of the 26th ultimo, inclosing copy of a report from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, relative to the state of affairs in the Moush district.

I approve the representations which you have made to the Sublime Porte as to the necessity of providing sufficient supplies for the refugees who have returned to their homes, and your action with regard to the arrest of Hadji Faris also has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 150.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 8.)

(No. 619.)
Constantinople, August 2, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 570, Confidential, of the 19th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting that, after a three days' engagement, the band of Armenians at Bayezid was beaten back across the frontier with a loss of fifteen, the Turks losing ten in killed and wounded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 150.

Acting Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 48.)
Erzeroum, July 22, 1904.

Sir,

WITH reference to my telegram of the 16th instant, I have the honour to report that, after a three days' engagement, the band of Armenians at Bayezid was beaten back across the frontier with a loss of fifteen. The Turks lost ten in killed and wounded.

The Vali tells me that, according to what he hears, a considerable number of revolutionaries are still on the Persian frontier, awaiting an opportunity for entering this vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

No. 151.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 8.)

(No. 623.)
Therapia, August 2, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 128 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a Memorandum, drawn up by Mr. Lamb, containing the Turkish version of the recent incidents in the Moush neighbourhood.

Captain Tyrrell states that in the combat at Gravi (Karavi) the Turks lost seventeen men killed, whereas the Porte state that twelve men were killed and eight wounded.

The two accounts agree in saying that the insurgents burned the village before the arrival of the Turkish troops, and that all the inhabitants fled, but no mention is made in Captain Tyrrell's Report of the village of Akshan, which the Turkish

version says was likewise burned and abandoned by the insurgents. Captain Tyrrell, however, states that a battalion of Turkish soldiers surrounded a village called Sikavi, an hour beyond Gravi, during the night (presumably of the 29th ultimo), and made an unprovoked attack on it at dawn the following day, and that he himself had counted the bodies of twenty-seven dead villagers, of whom ten were women. No mention is made of Sikavi in the Report received by the Porte, which states, however that the soldiers and gendarmes pursued ten of the insurgents to a place called Sheikh Yussouf, 3 miles from Karavi (Gravi), where they took refuge in a church and refused to surrender, so that it was necessary to storm the building, with the result that the ten insurgents were all killed.

Captain Tyrrell further reports that an affray occurred at a place called Kumis, in the Moush Plain, on the 23rd ultimo, which resulted in the death of five Mussulmans at the hands of the insurgent, and that the various incidents have caused much irritation among the soldiers and Mussulmans against the Armenians. He adds that the insurgents, who are again active in the plain, would appear to be determined to force matters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 151.

Memorandum by Mr. Lamb.

FOLLOWING is the official version of the incidents alluded to at the end of Captain Tyrrell's telegram of the 30th ultimo:—

On the 16th (29th) July some forty artillerymen, belonging to the Moush garrison, were sent out to meet and bring in two guns, dispatched some time previously from Trebizond to replace two others of an obsolete pattern in use at Moush. At a distance of 9 or 10 miles north of the town they fell into an ambush prepared for them by some thirty or forty Armenian revolutionaries, who had been concealed in the village of Karavi (?), losing twelve of their number killed and eight wounded.

News of this outrage reached Moush about half-past 6 in the evening, and troops and gendarmes were immediately dispatched to the spot. On their arrival near Karavi the revolutionaries set fire to that village and took to flight. The soldiers and gendarmes, under the command of the Alai Bey, pursued them to Aktchan, which village they likewise set fire to and abandoned. Ten of their number were traced to the village of Sheikh Yussouf, 3 miles from Karavi, where they took refuge in the church, where they were surrounded. After they had been frequently summoned to surrender, and had as frequently refused, towards sunset on the 17th (30th) the Alai Bey, fearing that the revolutionaries might take advantage of the approaching darkness to make good their escape, ordered an assault to be made upon the church, with the result that all ten of the Armenians were killed, a gendarme named Khalil, and a servant of the Mudir of Aktchan, who had accompanied the pursuing force, being dangerously wounded. The Armenians were all found to have been armed and provided with three belts of cartridges apiece.

(Signed) HARRY H. LAMB.

August 1, 1904.

No. 152.

Note communicated by Representatives of the Armenian Church to the Marquess of Lansdowne, August 9, 1904.

My Lord,

HIS Holiness Mgrditch Khrimian, Patriarch of the Armenian Church, at the end of a life wholly consecrated to the good of his people, has confided to us the mission of setting forth to His Majesty's Government and to the other Governments who subscribed to the Treaty of Berlin, the terrible distress of the Armenians in Turkey, and to ask the Powers to save those who survive, by the application of Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin, and the accomplishment of the reforms included in the Memorandum of May 1895.

The repetition of massacres in Sasun under the same circumstances as those of 1894, and with the authority of the same officials and the same Kurdish Chiefs who

ordered and carried out, ten years ago, the same crimes against humanity, gives to our appeal a quality of tragic urgency.

Crushed day by day under a load of misery, the Armenian people are oppressed and ruined by tax collectors, gendarmes, officials of all kinds, and by Turkish and Kurdish Chiefs. They are despoiled of their goods, reduced to slavery and without protection for their lives or the honour of their wives and daughters. In despair and at the end of their patience they await, according to local testimony, further catastrophes with a dull resignation or in places with a growing exasperation. That they have for centuries, in spite of invasion and disaster, represented European ideas and culture in the East, is their worst crime in the eyes of their executioners. Their last expectation of safety lies in the hope that the European Powers will insist on the fulfilment of the international instruments which would immediately end their long and undeserved martyrdom.

We know, my Lord, that, faithful to historic English traditions, it has often been shown both by word and deed, that you are desirous of helping our people in the way that humanity, justice and the actual clauses of the Treaties demand. Therefore it is with confidence that we address ourselves to you and ask you in the name of the Reverend Catholicos d'Etchmiadzin and of our whole nation to obtain from the Porte the fulfilment of Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin and the Memorandum of 1895.

Recent events have proved once again how right the European Powers were to demand the nomination of a Governor who would be responsible to them, for all reform is nullified beforehand unless assured by this necessary control.

We have therefore ventured, my Lord, to call your attention to two points where action on the part of the Powers would obtain immediate good results for the distressed people; the removal of the guilty officials who, condemned by the Embassies in 1894 still remain in office instigating fresh massacres; and the repression of innumerable abuses, annoyances and crimes, to which the gathering of taxes by pitiless force of arms, gives rise. But, there again, nothing can be done except under the surveillance and control of the European Powers and their local representatives.

We hope, my Lord, that this urgent appeal will be listened to by you and will evoke a noble and generous movement on behalf of an unhappy people and assure to them the first necessities of life, safety, and honour, which England, our moral teacher, claims that all men should have, and the enjoyment of which the Treaties have led us to hope for during the last quarter of a century.

We confidently place our cause in your hands.

(Signed) H. SARAJIAN,
Bishop of the Armenian Church of America.
S. AYVADIAN,
Archbishop of the Armenian Perso-Indian.
Dr. LEON LORIS-MELIKOW.

No. 152 a.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, August 3, 1904.*

NESTORIAN Patriarch.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 126 of yesterday.

His Beatitude's decoration was gazetted on the 15th January last.

The Grand Vizier says that Nimrod has been removed; that stipend will be paid; and that he has sanctioned guard.

No. 152 b.

Question asked in the House of Commons, August 12, 1904.

Mr. Bryce.—To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give any further information to the House regarding the troubles in the neighbourhood of Van, Bitlis, and Barjazid, and the Kurdish outrages reported from that region; and whether it is intended to lay before Parliament papers regarding the condition of the Armenian provinces.

Answer.

His Majesty's Consular officers in the district of Sasun have reported that the measures taken by the Turkish authorities at the end of June have produced a material improvement in the condition of affairs.

The refugees have been reinstated in their homes under the supervision of a Commission, of which Armenian notables form an element. Food has been supplied to them, their cattle is being restored, and their houses rebuilt.

The alleged participation of the Kurds in the recent disturbances has not been substantiated, and the orders issued by the authorities were undoubtedly intended to prevent it.

There has, unfortunately, been a recrudescence within the last ten days of incursions on the part of revolutionary bands across the Turco-Persian frontier, involving encounters with the Turkish regulars.

The general condition of the Asiatic vilayets appears to be normal, but there is no objection to laying the papers which relate to the special incidents referred to in the question.

No. 153.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 15.)

(No. 636.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August 9, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copies of extracts from the local press announcing the election of the Armenian Catholic Patriarch on the 4th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 153.

Extract from the "Moniteur Oriental" of August 5, 1904.

L'Élection du Patriarche Arméno-Orthodoxe.

L'ASSEMBLÉE plénière des Archevêques et Évêques Arméno-Catholiques, comprenant seize membres, a tenu hier, dans l'Église de Sainte-Marie, Rue Sakyz-Aghatch, une séance à huis clos, afin de procéder au scrutin définitif pour l'élection du nouveau Patriarche.

La séance a commencé à 2 heures et demie, et a pris fin à 7 heures du soir.

Après une courte prière l'assemblée a continué la discussion commencée dans les séances précédentes sur le budget du Patriarcat et sur les affaires des Évêchés.

On a procédé ensuite à l'élection.

En dehors d'un Archimandrite servant de Secrétaire, aucune autre personne ne se trouvait dans l'église.

Sur une table, placée au milieu de la nef, était un ciboire encadré de deux candélabres. C'est dans ce ciboire que chaque membre venait jeter son bulletin de vote.

Le bulletin de vote des Métropolitains d'Adana, arrivé par courrier, a été aussi mis dans le ciboire.

Un des Évêques a procédé au dépouillement des bulletins, tandis qu'un Secrétaire notait les résultats.

Vers 7 heures le résultat définitif de l'élection a été proclamé.

Sa Grandeur l'Évêque d'Égypte, Mgr. Boghos Sabaghian a été élu par 14 voix.

Sa Béatitude le Patriarche Paul Pierre XII Sabaghian, a reçu aussitôt les félicitations de tous. Il a été revêtu ensuite des habits patriarcaux. Les autres Archevêques et Évêques ont revêtu également leurs habits sacerdotaux, et tandis que les cloches sonnaient à toute volée, les portes de l'église ont été ouvertes, et le Secrétaire du Synode a annoncé le résultat de l'élection.

Sa Béatitude le nouveau Patriarche a dit alors une prière pour le peuple. Puis, précédé des autres Prélats et des chantres, il est entré au Patriarcat.

Le peuple massé dans la cour a crié trois fois, "Padichahim tchok yacha."

Dans la salle du Patriarcat Mgr. Arpiarian, ci-devant *locum tenens*, a félicité, le premier, le nouveau Patriarche de son élection, et a dit des prières pour Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Sa Béatitude a reçu ensuite les félicitations de toute l'assistance.

Le résultat de l'élection Patriarcale a été transmis immédiatement au Ministère de la Justice et des Cultes, ainsi qu'au Vatican.

Sa Béatitude le Patriarche Paul Pierre XII Sabaghian est né en 1836 à Alep. Après avoir fait de brillantes études dans cette ville, il alla au Monastère de Zeunnar, où il les compléta. Ordonné prêtre, il remplit pendant de longues années en province des Missions, qui mirent rapidement sa personalité en relief. Il fut sacré Évêque le 28 Octobre, 1901 (v. s.). C'est un polyglotte et un administrateur distingué, qui a, en plusieurs circonstances, donné des preuves d'un grand talent. Très riche, il emploie sa fortune à des œuvres de charité.

Inclosure 2 in No. 153.

Extract from the "Levant Herald" of August 5, 1904.

The Election of the Armenian Catholic Patriarch.

THE Holy Synod met at half-past 2 yesterday afternoon in the Cathedral of Sainte-Marie for the election of a new Patriarch.

The proceedings continued until 7 o'clock in the evening, when Mgr. Paul Sabaghian, Bishop of Egypt, was elected Patriarch of the Armenian Catholics.

The doors of the sacred edifice were then thrown open, and the bells announced the advent of a new Patriarch to the throne of St. Gregory the Illuminator.

All the clergy and the faithful assembled in the court entered the church.

Before the altar stood all the Bishops, and in the centre the new Patriarch. His Béatitude wore his sacerdotal robes, and, holding the Patriarchal staff, gave his first blessing to the members of the Holy Synod.

Prayers were subsequently offered up for the long life of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.

The election of the new Patriarch was immediately notified to the Ministry of Justice, which, through the intermediary of the Grand Vizier, will submit it to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.

The consecration of the new Patriarch will take place in a few days.

Mgr. Sabaghian has adopted the title of Peter XII, in accordance with tradition since the time of the Patriarch Peter I.

The new Patriarch is a native of Aleppo, and was born in 1836. He first studied in his native town, and in 1849 was sent to the Monastery of Bzomas, in the Lebanon, which was the ancient residence of the Catholic Patriarchs of Cilicia. He was ordained in 1857 by the Patriarch Gregory Peter VIII. He remained at the monastery until 1863, and was afterwards successively sent to Urfa, Harput, and Malatia. He everywhere displayed sound judgment, and always proved himself prudent and full of zeal. In 1864 he visited Bzomas, Jerusalem, and Beirut, where he was elected "Murakas," and it in October of the same year that he was made chief of the Armenian Catholic community at Alexandria. In 1870 Cardinal Hassoun, the eminent Prelate and politician, intrusted to him the ecclesiastical administration of the entire Armenian Catholic community throughout Egypt. He replaced the late Mgr. Akchehirlian as Bishop of Egypt, being consecrated in 1900.

His Beatitude is not a linguist; he has on all occasions displayed great tact in affairs, and has never missed an oportunity of manifesting his devotion to the Imperial throne.

No. 154.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received August* 15.)

(No. 638.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August* 9, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 623 of the 2nd instant reporting upon the renewal of disturbances in the Plain of Moush, I have the honour to transmit copy of a Memorandum left with me by the French Chargé d'Affaires, containing the latest news received by the French Embassy from their Consular Agent at Van, which indicates a recrudescence of the revolutionary movement, having, it is pointed out, for object to attract the attention of the Powers.

I also beg to inclose copy of a Memorandum by Mr. Lamb, showing the nature of the representations made to the Grand Vizier, under my instructions, upon the receipt of Captain Tyrrell's telegram reporting that fighting had occurred at Gravi and Sikavi. Your Lordship will perceive that the Grand Vizier at once issued instructions to the local authorities to prevent the repetition of such acts as those stated to have occurred at Sikavi, and has requested that the foreign Consular officers may be told to use special care not to let the population imagine that their Governments are supporting the revolutionary movement.

I received a telegram from Captain Tyrrell from Moush on the 5th instant asking for permission to visit certain villages about two days distant, in order to investigate a complaint made by the Armenian Bishop. In authorizing Captain Tyrrell to make this journey, I warned him that he should be especially careful to so regulate his movements as not to let the insurgents imagine that he was giving them any encouragement, since it appeared that they were bent on provoking foreign intervention, and I suggested that he might invite the Russian Consul, who is still at Moush, to accompany him on his expedition.

Captain Tyrrell should be back in Moush to-morrow, and I propose to instruct him to remain there for the present, should he report that the neighbourhood is still in an unsettled state.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 154.

Memorandum communicated by M. Bapst to Sir N. O'Conor.

ENTRE Khinis et Mouch, à Kara Aghatch, un détachement d'artillerie venant d'Erzéroum a été attaqué le 31 Juillet. On signale actuellement des troubles occasionnés par de petites bandes de révolutionnaires.

A Nérék, près du monastère d'Aghatch (?), des révolutionnaires ont attaqué les soldats, leur ont tué et blessé plusieurs hommes.

On signale d'autres groupes de révolutionnaires qui seraient actuellement disposés à se montrer en divers endroits à la fois et à provoquer des désordres qui amèneraient de nouveaux massacres pour attirer de nouveau l'attention des Grandes Puissances.

Van, le 3 Août, 1904.

Inclosure 2 in No. 154.

Memorandum by Mr. Lamb.

(No. 261.)

IN accordance with your Excellency's instructions, I this afternoon caused the substance of Captain Tyrrell's telegram of yesterday to be communicated to the Grand Vizier, whom I was unable to see personally, drawing his attention in particular to the dangerous temper in which Captain Tyrrell represented the troops at Mush to be and the disastrous results which must ensue if immediate and adequate measures were not taken to restrain them from a repetition of such acts as he describes to have taken place at Sikavi.

The Grand Vizier returned me a message to the effect that he had immediately taken measures for the transmission of the necessary orders to Mousb. He asked me at the same time to represent to your Excellency the desirability of impressing on the Consuls in those regions that they also should, by their action and language, endeavour not to give encouragement to the discontented element of the population, which was prone to interpret their investigations and their representations to the local authorities as a sign that the European Governments were supporting them in their insurrectionary movement.

I replied that we had full confidence in the discretion of our Consular officers in those parts, and were convinced that they would neither do nor say anything calculated to encourage rebellion. The representations they were from time to time compelled to make were made in the interests of the Ottoman Government itself. If his Highness meant to suggest that they should bring direct influence to bear on the revolutionary element itself, such a thing was obviously beyond their powers, since our Consuls had no acquaintance, or means of communication, with it.

(Signed) HARRY B. LAMB.

August 2, 1904.

No. 155.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.[*]

(No. 304.)

Foreign Office, August 16, 1904.

Sir,

THE American Ambassador left with me on the 3rd instant the inclosed draft of a Memorial which two Prelates of the Armenian Church—one of them, Armenian Archbishop for America—desired, by instruction of the Armenian Patriarch, to lay before the King.†

I promised Mr. Choate that I would, if possible, give these gentlemen an interview, and I received them on the 9th instant, when they handed me a note, copy of which is likewise inclosed,‡ and, at the same time, expressed to me their desire to obtain, if possible, an audience of the King.

I duly submitted to His Majesty the Memorial above referred to, but he was unable to find time to receive the Archbishops, being on the eve of his departure for Marienbad.

I informed the Archbishops of the various representations made to the Porte by your Excellency on behalf of the Armenians—representations which, I said, had in my opinion produced useful results, and I do not propose to return any written reply to their note.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 155*.

Mr. Hagopian to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 17.)

35, *Chesilton Road, Fulham,*
August 16, 1904.

My dear Marquess,

THE Armenian Archbishops deputed by his Holiness the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin were exceedingly pleased with their reception by your Lordship at the Foreign Office on Tuesday, the 9th instant. As for myself, having been requested to assist the deputation, I was glad of the opportunity of discussing the situation with your Lordship. I have duly explained to its members all that your Lordship stated. The Mission of the two Archbishops, however, is to ask for the effective and conscientious application of the principles of Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin, and of the scheme of reforms contained in the Memorandum of May 1895. The question of the situation in the

[*] Also to Sir M. Durand (No. 177). † No. 145. ‡ No. 152.

Sasun district is only a part of the larger question of the general condition of the Armenians, and the causes of the recent outbreaks in the Sasun district are submitted as an example of the effect of the harsh and unconstitutional policy with which the Armenians are treated under the Sultan's immediate rule.

The Catholicos of Etchmiadzin has, since the massacres and great disorders of the years 1894–95–96, accumulated a mass of data on the normal condition of his flock in the Ottoman Empire. This data, together with the more recent events, have lead him to send two of his Archbishops to the Great Powers of Europe who have signed the Treaty of Berlin. As regards the recent considerable loss of life and property, the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople has himself addressed a strong protest to the Grand Vizier, stating that the Turkish troops, under the orders of the Vali of Bitlis, had been too precipitate in attacking the Armenian villages, and threw the entire responsibility for the bloodshed which had occurred upon the local authorities.

We have read with great interest in the "Times" of the 13th instant, a full report of your Lordship's speech in the House of Lords in reply to the questions put by the Earl of Aberdeen. We have always wished that Great Britain should take the place which naturally and logically devolves upon her in the matter of these Armenian reforms, and we thank both your Lordship and Sir Nicholas O'Conor, His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, for your united efforts to bring about an improvement of the situation in the Vilayet of Bitlis. We gladly note your proposal "that an efficient gendarmerie should be reorganized at Bitlis and neighbouring vilayets (which we hope may be brought about with the help of British officers)," and that an inquiry should be held into the mode and system of the administration in order to check existing abuses (which again, we hope, will be done with the assistance of the Consuls in order to eliminate from the administration all officials, high or low, who have had a notoriously bad record, or who have shown incapacity, or whose fanatical prejudices have once more triumphed in the wholesale destruction of the lives, property, and honour of the Armenian inhabitants).

At our interview I ventured to point out to your Lordship the necessity of selecting the important officials in conjunction with the British Government of the need of an efficient gendarmerie officered by European officials, and of the carrying on of the administration with the assistance and under the supervision of the European Consuls as the *sine qua non* of success. The reforms proposed by His Majesty's Government, and accepted by the Turkish Council of Ministers in the case of Sasun, already contain the germs of the principle of an effective supervision as required by Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin. But I need not point out that the said Article does not refer to one single province, but it embraces "the provinces inhabited by the Armenians," and the Mission with which the two Archbishops have been intrusted is to ask that His Majesty's Government, in making efforts for the amelioration of the condition of the Christian inhabitants of the Vilayet of Bitlis, which have so happily succeeded so far, should not lose sight of the other vilayets.

I have just received an Armenian newspaper of conservative tendencies published at Marseilles, containing a summary of the demands of the inhabitants of Sasun, and I herewith beg to inclose a translation of it for your Lordship's kind perusal. I hope that the details given as to the treatment of the refugees are incorrect, but if they in any way approach a true description of the facts, the behaviour of the local authorities can hardly be called decent. Mere cattle or dumb animals would be treated with greater kindness and consideration.

Your Lordship stated at our interview that the British Government had for years pressed upon the Sublime Porte the necessity of constructing barracks in the Sasun district for the protection of the inhabitants, and wondered why they had not done so. When I mentioned this point to the Archbishops, one of them said: "How could the Armenians look with favour on a scheme which would bring the Turkish soldiery into their midst?" And now we have this report partly explaining the objection, and making counter-proposals to the effect that the barracks should be built in the Kurdish villages. Under these circumstances the selection of the locality for these barracks is a matter of great importance, and requires careful consideration.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN.

No. 156.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 307.)
Foreign Office, August 20, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 638 of the 9th instant, reporting a recrudescence of disturbances in Armenia.

I approve the terms of Mr. Lamb's Memorandum to the Grand Vizier and your Excellency's instructions to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 157.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 649.)
Therapia, August 15, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that Tewfik Bey has been appointed Vali of Yemen, and has left Constantinople to assume the duties of his new post.

Tewfik Bey was a Secretary at the Palace until 1897, when he was appointed Mutessarif of Jerusalem.

In 1901 he was transferred as Vali to Salonica, and in the following year succeeded Ferid Pasha at Konieh, where he only remained a few months.

Sir Alfred Biliotti described him as honest, intelligent, and well-disposed, but lacking in experience.

As Mutessarif of Jerusalem his conduct of affairs was also marked by honesty, justice, and firmness, and his departure was much regretted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 158.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 654.)
Therapia, August 16, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 638 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting upon a visit paid by him and the French Consul to the villages of Germav and Dapig in the course of last month.

Mr. Heathcote says that the inhabitants of the former village appeared discontented, although they had received wheat for food and seed millet from the Turkish authorities, had recovered a portion of their cattle and had been offered pecuniary assistance to enable them to rebuild their houses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 158.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 35.)
Bitlis, July 20, 1904.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 33 of the 13th July, I have the honour to report that when Captain Tyrrell went for the second time to Sassun and Talori on the 15th July, the French Consul and I accompanied him as far as Germav, one of the nearest of the destroyed villages, about five hours' distant from Mousb. We found over 200 villagers there out of an alleged population of 320 before the outbreak.

Millet had been supplied by the Government for sowing and wheat for food, and the people were already in possession of a small number of sheep and cattle, which had

been in the hands of neighbouring Kurds. We were unable to ascertain with any certainty how these animals came to be restored; the Government claims the credit on the one hand, but from the confused and contradictory statements of the villagers it would appear that before the troubles some of the cattle had really been intrusted to the Kurds on condition that a proportion should be returned and part retained in payment.

The inhabitants, however, though possessed of seed, oxen, and of timber, were refusing to sow the grain, alleging that it was too late, or to rebuild their houses, claiming that the Government ought to do it for them. The season is doubtless late for sowing; but if it were undertaken at once, there would, I think, be good reason to hope for a crop, and we consequently endeavoured to persuade them to set to work without delay; perhaps they may do so now that they see that we do not support them in their refusal. It is clear that if they eat the seed-grain now in place of the wheat which they profess to dislike, they would have no claim on the Government later for further assistance.

As to the rebuilding, the Government had offered some money to the people of Germav, but they had refused it, hoping to obtain more. We strongly advised them to take what they could get.

The authorities claim that a considerable number of cattle have been recovered throughout the district, but I am not in a position to speak for any other part of it.

On our return we passed Dapig, where barracks are being built in a commanding site. The officer in command assured us that the buildings would be ready for use before the cold weather.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 159.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 655.)
Constantinople, August 16, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from the British Acting Consul at Jeddah, reporting the arrival at that town of eighty-two prisoners on their way from Medina to Taif, and the departure of Baki Bey and Abussaoud Effendi for Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 159.

Acting Consul Hussain to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 68.)
Jeddah, July 31, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, on the evening of the 29th instant, three sambouks arrived here from Yembo and brought eighty-two prisoners from Medina. Forty-five out of these are the Medina residents who have been imprisoned for intriguing and rioting against the Government officials, and the remaining thirty-seven are military officers who mutinied at Medina some time ago, and were found to be in league with these rioters when they attempted to assault Osman Pasha Sheikh-el-Harem of Medina.

All these prisoners will be sent to Taif in a day or two to undergo their terms. The ringleaders are committed for life, and some for ten years, and the rest for one to three years.

The military officers will be tried at Taif by a special Court appointed for the purpose.

Names of the ringleaders of the riot:—

(1) Mufti Daghistani, (2) Tahir Sumbul, (3) Ahmed Abul Jud, (4) Mansoor Zuhali, (5) Yahya Daftedar, (6) Syed Ali Hibshi, (7) Syed Jamel-el-Lail (died) and his two sons, (10) Abdurrahman Ilias, (11) Bin Abdurrahman Ilias.

Baki Bey and Syed Abussaoud, the members of the Commission of Inquiry sent to Medina, return to Constantinople to-day by the Khedivial mail-steamer "Mahalla."

I have, &c.
(Signed) MOHAMMED HUSSAIN.

No. 160.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 656.)
My Lord,
Constantinople, August 16, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 476 of the 18th June, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Jeddah, reporting on recent robberies on the Mecca road, and on the preventive measures adopted by the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 160.

Acting Consul Hussain to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 65.)
Sir,
Jeddah, July 26, 1904

I HAVE the honour to report that some petty robberies took place on the Jeddah–Mecca road during a month's time, but the soldiers stationed along the road to guard it have been on the look-out to trace the robbers, and the day before yesterday a detachment of soldiers, while patrolling the road, found the robbers of the Moahbad and Asam tribes attacking a small caravan of the Oteba tribe, who were coming to Jeddah for supplies, and fired on them. Two of the robbers were killed and three or four wounded, and two were taken prisoners. The prisoners were taken to Hadda, where they were summarily beheaded, according to the orders of the authorities.

The general outcry raised by the pilgrims and the newspapers of the different parts of the world regarding the insecurity of the roads of Hejaz, appears to have roused the Turkish authorities at last to take energetic measures to make the roads safe once more.

I have, &c
(Signed) MOHAMMED HUSSAIN.

No. 161.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 657.)
My Lord,
Therapia, August 16, 1904.

THE Armenian Patriarch called upon me yesterday and spoke at considerable length about the condition of affairs in Armenia and the late incidents in the Moush district.

His Beatitude complained mostly of the heavy taxes levied upon the people and of the existing administrative organization by which all the power was placed in the hands of a Vali living in the capital of the province and exercising little control over the acts of the subordinate officials. He promised to send me a Memorandum clearly stating his complaints in respect to the two questions, and he begged for my good offices with the Imperial Government.

In the course of conversation I told his Beatitude that I had heard with deep concern the statements he had made to several newspaper correspondents to the effect that he believed that between 6,000 and 9,000 persons had been massacred in the Sasun and Talori districts during the late troubles and that I deeply regretted that upon my applying for precise information which would enable me to make earnest representations to the Grand Vizier, his Beatitude had sent me word that he was unable to indicate the places at which these massacres had taken place or to affirm that his reports were based on really trustworthy information.

His Beatitude replied that he had had no means of controlling these reports, but he had communicated them to others as he had received them.

I said that judging from the reports of His Majesty's Consul at Van, who had visited many of the districts in question, the numbers of victims mentioned by his Beatitude was grossly exaggerated. Captain Tyrrell was more inclined to estimate the number at 900 than at 9,000, and he had, moreover, been unable to confirm the statements in the public press that there had been any massacre of Armenians in the ordinary sense of these words, although, no doubt, many innocent persons had been killed both by the insurgents and the troops. In fact, as far as I could judge at present, it seemed that the late outrage at Sikavi, upon which I had based very serious representations to the Sublime Porte, was the most wanton deed of the whole summer.

I did not despair of following to the end the investigations which had been set on foot by the Grand Vizier. If, however, his Beatitude could now furnish me with more definite information, I would do all in my power, in conjunction with my French and Russian colleagues, to bring about a searching investigation on the spot.

Mgr. Ormanian replied that he was not in a position to give me this information, but that he believed that the number of persons killed and massacred in the late troubles was certainly not less than 2,000.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 162.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 658.)
My Lord,
Therapia, August 16, 1904.

I HAVE the honour, in continuation of my despatch No. 657 of to-day's date, to inclose herewith to your Lordship, copies of two despatches from Captain Tyrrell.

These despatches are of unusual interest, as they record the result of his personal visit to the disturbed districts, and enable a correct judgment to be formed of the events which have taken place, and their real origin.

With reference to Captain Tyrrell's suggestion that three or four Consuls would be needed to superintend effectually the resettlement, I am afraid it would be useless to seek the co-operation of the other Powers or that, if given, it would have satisfactory results. It would, in any case, be the strongest incentive to the insurgents to persevere in their lawless course in the hope of bringing about European intervention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 162.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 1.)
Sir,
Moush, July 31, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that when I left Van under instructions from your Excellency to visit Gelli Guzan and investigate what had occurred there, I had no idea that my journey would be such an extended one, or that I should be away so long. I expected to return to Van on the completion of the investigation, and intended to report fully from there. So I brought very little stationery with me, and am without office necessaries. But under the circumstances, and as I have visited the disturbed districts twice, I feel that you would perhaps like some news in explanation of the telegrams I have sent from Moush.

I will, therefore, send a summarizing despatch, reserving the reasons on which I base my conclusions and details of the country and villages, until I get back to Van. As I have no record with me of the consecutive number of my last despatch from Van, I will start a new series for as long as I remain in Moush. Also, for want of paper and envelopes, I cannot make copies of these despatches here.

As explained in my telegram of the 8th July, an accurate, or even approximate, computation of the number of Armenians killed was impossible, and there were absolutely no Armenians left from whom to make inquiries. All that one saw were the remains of burnt villages, and the camps of the soldiers. Before I returned to Moush, the refugees had begun to come in for resettlement, and I was able to converse with the Armenian villagers.

I found corpses in the mountains, including those of women and children; and, of course, there were many I did not see. Still, there were not as many as the Armenians said. A man would tell me that there were twenty or thirty in a certain place, never dreaming that I would go up into the mountains and verify his statements. If I found two or three anywhere near the place indicated, I considered myself lucky. Often there were none, or else the guide would, after many hours climbing, escape from having the story disproved, by indicating a spot which it was quite impossible to reach that day.

A few such experiences made me very sceptical about the number of corpses to be found in the mountains, and of accounts of massacres of people who surrendered. What corpses I did find did not tell me much, as at that time it was impossible to say whether they had been killed or died from exposure. The Armenians said that there were not more evidences of massacre about, because the soldiers threw all the corpses into the rivers, then in spring flood. The Turks said that it was quite impossible for them to kill women and children or even unarmed men, and that the corpses I found were those of people who, in foolish and causeless terror, had fled to the mountains, and naturally at that season had died from exposure. I can only say that there is, so far as I know, absolutely no proof one way or the other. Both statements are interested, and both exaggerated.

My belief is that very little massacring took place in the villages; that the people had, in the vast majority of cases, managed to leave them and escape to the hills before the soldiers got in; that for some days the soldiers (*pace* the asseverations of every Turkish officer) were searching for them in the hills and killing every one they found. At the same time most of the people succeeded in hiding themselves till these few days were over. There is no doubt that practically every man in the disturbed districts was an armed rebel, and the revolutionists "began it" by attacking Kurdish villages. Then, in deciding the point of "massacres and atrocities," one can hardly judge the Turkish soldier by our humaner standards. One must remember that this was, for a few days, war, and to him a religious war, as well as one against rebels; and that at the commencement the troops suffered losses which made them eager for revenge.

I also incline, after careful consideration, but again without absolute proof, to the view that the revolutionists burned the villages themselves before evacuating them, as part of a preconceived plan to afford the soldiers no shelter, to force the people to flee into the mountains, to excite public opinion against the Turks, and even to increase the casualties among the Armenians and to prevent them from surrendering. When the people began to come in and surrender they were not killed.

As for participation by Kurds, even the Armenians in many cases absolutely denied it, and said that all the damage was done by soldiers. Others said that Kurds were used by the soldiers as guides to find the people who had fled into the mountains. This is very probable. At the same time many of the Armenians owe their lives to Kurdish protection, and were hiding for a long time in Kurdish villages. There is in Sassun a feudal relationship between the Kurds and the Armenians, and the latter made over their cattle and goods to the former with the stipulation that they were to be returned when the affair was over, while if the owner were killed they would become the property of the Kurd who took charge of them. Now that resettlement has begun, the Kurds have in some cases loyally fulfilled their part of the bargain and returned the cattle and goods. In others, where the Kurds are disposed to keep what they have got, the Armenians are in a difficult position. The Government will recover their cattle if they will say where they are, but they cannot do this without laying the Kurds who sheltered them open to the charge of having sheltered a rebel whom the Government was looking for. Once the order for resettlement was received, the inhabitants of Shenik, Semal, Gelli Guzan, and the six villages of Shattakh, who were mostly refugees in Moush, were sent back to their villages. But there was considerable delay in Talori, Sassun, and Khiyan, owing to the inaccessibility of those places, for which a special Settlement Officer was appointed. When he arrived, the Sassun refugees, mostly from Moush, and the Khiyan refugees, mostly from Passur, were sent in leisurely, and the building of barracks was begun energetically. But the Talori refugees did not appear. I found that they were hiding in the quarter of the Sassun Güzu known as Kavvar-i-Pisank. I therefore pitched my tents there. At first a few men turned up casually, saying that

they were the only survivors—afterwards that there were a few others "in the mountains." They seemed happy enough and well fed, and not at all like people who had been living in mountain-tops for nearly three months and eating nothing but grass, which was what they wanted me to believe.

I visited several of the villages of Kavvar-i-Pisank to try and induce refugees from Talori to go back to their own villages, but I was always told that there were now in that particular place at most one house or four or five persons. I then announced that I was going into Talori, and that if people cared to have the advantage of my protection they could accompany me; if not, they could stay where they were and make their own arrangements. That evening crowds began collecting on the hills above the village where I was camped, people were passing my tents during the night; and when I started next morning, I found 299 refugees collected. I sent them off to their own villages and went myself to the central village of Talori, where I found the Mutessarif of Moush on an inspection visit. I gave him the names of all the refugees I had collected with their villages, handing them over, and from that date they began to draw the Government allowance of 11 paras a day per head, or its equivalent in food.

I next visited the villages of Akcha Ser (Ishkhiyan Tzor), Sevit, Guznak, Ardgunk, and Helin, and found that the resettlement had begun there. When I came back to Talori on my way back to Moush I found the number of refugees there had reached to nearly 750.

Though, as I said in my telegram of the 30th July, the work of resettlement is progressing satisfactorily, still it is not an easy one, and the people must suffer somewhat, and will probably find themselves on short rations at times, and uncomfortable for some time to come.

It would tax even a good Administration with money at its command to carry out this work really well; and one cannot expect the necessary forethought and arrangement from most Turkish officials. For instance, refugees of the Khiyan villages were given one month's subsistence allowance in lieu of rations in cash. They complain reasonably that money is of no use to them there; they cannot eat cash, and there is nothing to buy.

On the other hand the Government could not transport sufficient food to those inaccessible places. They were doing their best to collect animals for transport, and to arrange for a regular service; but even with a more efficient administration, it is no easy matter to overcome the physical difficulties of the countries; and meanwhile, the people must help themselves as far as possible. I found a considerable inclination on their part to do nothing except cavil at the terms on which they are being resettled, and to call upon me to provide everything on the spot or else force the Turks to do so.

These terms are really very fair if only they are fairly carried out. In the nearer villages I think they are being fairly carried out, but in the more inaccessible ones, as I have just pointed out, it is not so easy, though here again I think that the intentions of the officials are good, and only a little patience and trying to make the best of it are necessary.

I am not at all sure that the presence of a foreign Consul is an unmixed blessing. Every Armenian seems to think that he is there to uphold them in every case against their Government, and that the best way to please him is to pour the most absurd complaints and lies into his ears.

On the other hand it undoubtedly tends to keep the Turkish officials up to the mark, and to prevent petty tyranny.

But I would respectfully submit to your Excellency my opinion that it is better to do this work thoroughly, or to leave it entirely to the Turkish officials. In the former case it is quite impossible for one man to superintend the whole area over which resettlement is going on. There should be at least three—one for the districts north of the Kapan and Andok Mountains, and the villages of Gelli Geneman and Gelli Missur, which belong administratively to Kulp, one for Talori, and one for the Khiyan villages mentioned above. This is only a rough arrangement, and the three would probably find it necessary to distribute their spheres otherwise, and they would have to arrange to bring certain Sassun villages under their supervision also; but it would probably be necessary to have a fourth man. In any case, Consuls in Moush are useless to superintend resettlement going on in the mountains; and, if the Turkish officials are not to be trusted to carry out this work themselves, each Consul should, owing to the difficult nature of the country, and to the difficulty of taking one's tents, luggage, and even horses, about, and to the fact that supplies are almost impossible to obtain (barley for the horses is wholly wanting), have time for ample preparation and arrangement beforehand.

I referred in my telegram of the 30th July to the complaints which are being made as to the building of barracks; but this is only a natural and necessary precaution for the Turks to take. The people have brought it on themselves, and some of them even told me that they would have more revolution on the first opportunity, and that the last has not been heard of it yet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain*

Inclosure 2 in No. 162.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 3.)
Sir, *Moush, August 2, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that yesterday I had, at his request, an interview with the Armenian Murakhas here.

He began by thanking me in the name of the people for the trouble I had taken in going into the hill districts to see for myself what had happened there. At the same time he continued to give me the impression that they thought I had taken quite needless trouble, that this was hardly what they expected of a Consul, and that I might have been better employed in receiving Petitions, and in accepting *ex parte* statements at their face value.

He then went on to relate all the grievances of the Armenians as a nation, and the particular evils they are now enduring in this part of the country owing to recent events. I could not but agree with what he said on these points. The root of the evil is bad government, and that the Armenians are not protected from Kurds, Circassians, Zapiehs, and soldiers, by the Government which expects them to pay taxes to the utmost farthing, and which demands their loyalty, while often withholding from them ordinary justice. At the same time the whole of his speech was imbued with a revolutionary under current, with the still present hope of European intervention, with the idea that the Turkish yoke was to be shaken off. The revolutionary propaganda of recent years has penetrated to every class of the community. I was surprised to find in the mountains that the ignorant villagers were not quite the helpless tools of a few intriguers and guiding spirits, which I had supposed them to be; but that every one of them was saturated with the principles of an independent Armenia, and that they looked upon a foreign Consul as a sort of political emissary who also had this end in view.

I explained to the Murakhas that the revolutionists were his nation's worst enemies at the present time, that we were trying to mitigate the hardships of the unfortunate Armenians who have lately been rendered homeless, to urge the Turkish authorities to deal mercifully and kindly with the refugees, and to improve the general condition of the people. But that an affair like that which had occurred three days previously at Gravi, where seventeen soldiers had been killed, made it extremely difficult, and afforded the Turks some excuse for excesses.

He said, what all the Armenians say, that the revolutionists forced themselves upon the people, and that the Government did not protect the people from the Fedais, while it afterwards visited the sins of the Fedais upon the villages where they were known to have stayed.

This also is to a certain extent true.

But, on the other hand, all the people sympathise with and help the Fedais. If they did not, the task of the revolutionists would become so thankless and difficult that they would soon leave the country alone.

Then came the question whether an oppressed people had not a moral right to rebel. Possibly, but then they must be prepared to take the consequences of rebellion.

I begged the Murakhas to use all his influence to get these ideas of revolution and foreign intervention out of the heads of the people, to persuade them to keep quiet, and to give their Government no cause of complaint, and then to hope for a quiet life and an improved Government.

Having thus disposed of the general question we came to particulars. I found that he had nothing definite to complain of about the resettlement, probably because he knew that I know what was being done. One or two minor points which he mentioned I promised to bring to the notice of the Mutessarif, and I have no doubt these can be arranged without troubling your Excellency. Somewhat to my surprise he left untouched

the question of the new barracks and of the location of troops in the heart of the hitherto semi-independent Armenian districts, probably because my views on this point, and my advice to the people who had complained in those districts had been made known to him.

As regards the Gravi affair, reported fully in my yesterday's despatch, he said that the soldiers came and surrounded the village, and opened fire on it without cause. This is absolutely untrue, and is the invariable Armenian version of these occurrences. If the soldiers were in the habit of doing this, how is it that revolutionists always happen to be found in the villages they select for attack? Again, the position of the expended cartridge cases I found showed that the fight had been within the village, about the church and the houses facing it, and that the village had not been fired upon from positions outside. These same cartridge cases, and the fortification of the church also showed clearly that it was a case of revolutionists, without all the other evidence.

He then admitted all this, but said that the soldiers had burned the village. I have also explained to your Excellency yesterday how the smoke and flames which I saw could not be attributed to the soldiers.

He then said that the village of Akchan had been burned by the soldiers. Here again I could reply that I have been there myself, that out of eighty Armenian and seven Kurdish houses in the village not one had been burnt, and that only twelve buildings, barns, &c., on the outskirts of the village were burnt. He said that the village had been attacked by Kurds. I said that the only cartridges I had found there were Berdars, Moksins, and Gras, all rifles used by revolutionists and not by the Kurds. He said that Kurds used Berdar rifles. It may be so, but I have never yet seen a Kurd with one.

Of course the Sikavi incident is an indefensible one, and I could only say that I hoped this sort of thing would cease, but that the easiest way of bringing this about was to remove the cause of the provocation.

Finally, just as I was leaving, he said that a man had that moment come in from Talori to say that the allowances of money to the people had ceased, and that the Kaimakam there was doing nothing now that the Consul had left. I asked to see the man, and immediately recognized him as a half-witted fellow who had been the only guide I could get hold of when I left Moush for Susoun. I found this man to be such a liar and so troublesome that I had had to get rid of him. He wished to make me believe that every one in Talori had been massacred, and tried to prevent other villages from coming to my tents.

The day after I had dismissed him I came across him carrying a gun which had doubtless been used in the few days' fighting and then carefully hidden. He finally refused to settle down with the other refugees in his own village. I told the Murakhas what I knew of this man, and said that I could not possibly accept his statement. He had simply come in across the hills because he is a vagabond, and does not want to settle down and work with the other villagers at the rebuilding of their houses, &c.

I simply mention this incident and some of the baseless statements made by the Murakhas (in perfect good faith, I believe), to show how little reliance can be placed upon the majority of complaints and petitions one gets here, and the kind of sources from which the reports emanate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

Inclosure 3 in No. 162.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 2.)
Sir, *Moush, August 1, 1904.*

IN confirmation of my telegram of to-day's date, I have the honour to report that two mountain guns of the new pattern in exchange for the battery at Moush were on their way here from Erzeroum. On the 29th July forty men of the 1st Battalion 30th Regiment were sent out from Moush to meet them, take them over from the Erzeroum escort, and bring them in.

In the afternoon of that day these forty soldiers were passing the village of Gravi on the right bank of the Murad (Euphrates) in the plain, north of Moush. The village comes right up to the road and some of its houses extend along the road side for a

hundred yards or so. Immediately opposite them, across the road and about 50 yards away, is the church on a low knoll.

It is not clear whether the soldiers halted on the road under the church, whether they sat down to drink at the spring in the village, or whether they were merely passing along the road between the church and the village, when fire was opened upon them, both from the roof of the church, on which a stone saugar had been built, and from the roof of the houses. Anyhow they were completely surprised, seventeen were killed at the first volley and seven or eight wounded. The rest cleared out as quickly as possible and got away most of the wounded. All the dead were left, and some twenty rifles with the ammunition belonging to them fell into the hands of the revolutionists. The Turks say also that the bodies were afterwards stripped of their jackets and shirts, and in some cases mutilated. News was only received in Moush about sundown.

The Ferik at once sent out the remainder of the battalion with orders to meet the guns as quickly as possible and bring them safely in. Some cavalry and gendarmes, under Izzet Bey, the Alai Bey, and Ibrahim Bey, the Kaïmakam of the 24th Cavalry Regiment, also went out. As I was coming down the hill into Moush that evening I observed smoke in the plain in that direction, and after sunset I saw a light which we judged to be a burning village. I mentioned this point in order to bear out the version of the affair which I give and which I believe to be the correct one, and to dispose of the Armenian statement that the village was burnt by the soldiers. For the soldiers could not have arrived there till three hours after sundown, about 10 P.M. at earliest. When they got there they found that the revolutionists had decamped, having first set fire to the village, and that the latter was totally deserted, all the inhabitants having fled rather than await the retribution which would probably have been in store for them if they had been found there.

The Alai Bey and the gendarmerie went east in pursuit of the revolutionists. The battalion had apparently had orders on leaving Moush to go on and see to the safety of the guns. They found these at the village of Sikavi, about an hour further on, where their escort had encamped for the night. The guns were brought on into Moush the next day.

I only got the news of what had happened about 9 A.M. on the 30th July. I rode out at once and met the battalion returning. I counted the seventeen corpses. When I got back in the evening and went to see the Vali about the whole affair, I found that the Ferik had told him that only seven or eight soldiers had been killed, and it is only now that he knows that I saw the corpses myself, that he admits to the whole number.

What his object may be I do not know, but I have noticed this tendency to minimize losses in him before, and I had concluded, as the result of several conversations I had with him in the mountains on the subject of the military operations which had taken place in April and May, that he is not a man to be trusted, and that he has no particular regard for the truth. This unfortunately applies to most of the Turks here, and even more to the Armenians, so that I really can believe nothing unless I see it myself, or have very good confirmatory evidence. When I reached Gravi I found a Tabur Aghassi of gendarmerie there and a couple of zaptiehs, the village still burning, and four corpses (three being Mussulman and one Christian). These were said to have been wayfarers who happened to be on the road or in the vicinity at the time of the fight. The Tabur Aghassi had been left there to look after the villages of the immediate neighbourhood and to induce the inhabitants to return.

I picked up several Moksin and Berdan cartridge cases. These are the rifles chiefly affected by the revolutionists. Very few Mausers; and the troops were probably too much shaken to make much defence at the time. The church had been completely wrecked, the scattered fragments of its sacred books were littered about, and a fire was burning inside it. This was, of course, the work of the troops later on, but one can hardly be surprised at it under the circumstances, as the revolutionists had converted it into a fortress, and it was from it that the greater part of the casualties among the soldiers was inflicted.

The most surprising thing is that this detachment of forty soldiers should have walked so unsuspectingly into the trap, as the stone saugar all round the edge of the flat roof of the church was quite evident to any attentive man coming along the road. I had heard from the soldiers as I came along that they had done something in Sikavi, so I went on there.

I found the inhabitants in a panic and preparing to leave. There had been a massacre early that morning, and I saw the bodies of seventeen men and ten women. Of the former, one was an old Mussulman, an Erzerumli, who was in charge of the

post horses; this village being a "menzil," or stage, on the post road; two were Armenian butchers from Moush, where they are well known, and who had come out to Sikavi on business; the rest were villagers. No question of revolutionists at all. It seems that the battalion (1st Battalion 30th Regiment above mentioned) had come on during the night, taken over the guns, and in the morning deliberately entered the village and shot at every one they came across, in revenge for their comrades who had been ambuscaded at Gravi.

The Acting Bimbashi was present, and I should have given you his name in my telegram, only the authorities have begged me to wait until an inquiry has been held, as they say that the men were completely out of hand, and would not listen to their officers. This is very possible, and I have had the same story from other sources. This is the battalion which mutinied at Van, and which was sent here in consequence, and on which I reported to your Excellency early in January.

It seems that when the news of the Gravi affair came in on the evening of the 29th the men took their arms and went off, saying that they would do something even if they were hanged for it, and threatening to shoot their officers if they tried to stop them.

I feel that, if this sort of promiscuous retribution is to cease, an example ought to be made. Yet it is extremely difficult to fix the responsibility. It is not easy to punish a whole battalion, even when the state of discipline of the troops allows of such a course. One can say easily enough that the Ferik is responsible for such a state of things, but the fanaticism of the Turkish soldiers would not be altered by a change of Feriks.

My personal knowledge of Abdulla Effendi, the Acting Bimbashi of the battalion, makes me unwilling to hastily impute the blame to him unless I can get convincing proof that he was a party to the action of his men.

I found two post zaptiehs in Sikavi who bore out the statements of the villagers as to the details of this attack. I tried to persuade the villagers to remain, and told them that I would go and see the Vali directly I got back to Moush and make him send out some one to protect them. They were in fear of a similar massacre that night, and said that the Circassians had threatened to come and attack them. There are three Circassian villages in the vicinity, Zirink, Shalbo, and Tepe Keni, and these Circassians apparently do what they like in the surrounding Armenian villages and terrorize the gendarmerie.

I visited the village of Akelan across the river, which was also deserted. Found no corpses here, nor any evidence of a massacre. Twelve outbuildings, barns, store-houses, &c., had been burned. Here also there were zaptiehs looking after the village till the people should return. I do not believe that soldiers came here at all, but was told that the revolutionists, in passing from Gravi, had made a demonstration round the village, fired several shots, and burned the outhouses mentioned above, in order to frighten the people and induce them to abandon the village. All the cartridge cases I picked up here were Moksins Berdans, and Gras.

Directly I got back to Moush that evening I went to see the Vali, and told him exactly what I'd seen. He had had no news of the Sikavi affair, he said. He also promised to have some soldiers specially sent out to protect the village.

Next day I sent my dragoman out to see if this had been done. He found that the villagers had left, after all, on my departure, and had not cared to risk another night there. Only the Kyaya (Headman) remained, and there were some soldiers there to protect the houses until the people should return. The Kyaya said that no looting had taken place, that the villagers were safe with most of their goods and chattels and their live-stock in other villages, and that they would return gradually when the panic had subsided. There were three men and two women died of wounds to be added to the list of victims in the village, bringing the total up to thirty-two.

I have just heard that the Alai Bey found some of the revolutionists at Sheikh Yussuf, a village in the plain, further east, brought them to bay there, and killed ten of them. The people of Sheikh Yussuf have fled. I have seen some of them, who say that no massacre took place. The Armenian Murakhas, on the other hand, say that only seven armed men were killed by the Alai Bey and his gendarmes, and that these were not "real" revolutionists, but villagers, and that unarmed men were killed as well. When I shall have had time to go out there personally I may be able to inform your Excellency of what really happened there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

No. 163.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 662.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, August* 16, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from the British Acting Consul at Jeddah, reporting on the violent behaviour of the Russian Consul at that port towards the Sheikh of the boatmen on the occasion of the visit of the Russian Volunteer steam-ship "Smolensk" to the harbour.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 163.

Acting Consul Hussain to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 67.)
Sir, *Jeddah, July* 27, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to state that on the 23rd instant, at about 5·30 P.M., the Russian steam-ship "Smolensk" was seen approaching the Jeddah harbour, and the Russian Consul, M. Zimmermann, went to the sanitary office to go on board the ship.

The Sanitary Inspector had already gone off to give pratique to the ship, and the Russian Consul asked the Sheikh of boatmen, Hambazaza by name, to give him a boat to take him to the ship. Hambazaza said he would give a sambouk as soon as the ship was given pratique, or order was given by the Sanitary Inspector to send boats to the ship without her receiving pratique; he also added that as the steam-ship "Smolensk" was far away from the harbour (about 5 miles) it would be dark before the boat could reach alongside the ship, and that it was dangerous, on account of the reefs, to send a boat after sunset, as the water was very low in the passage. Upon this the Russian Consul, saying that the Sheikh did not want to give him a boat, got excited and boxed Hambazaza on his face and drew his sword. On receiving this provocation Hambazaza attempted to attack M. Zimmermann, but they were separated by the bystanders.

Eventually M. Zimmermann took a boat belonging to the Tombac Society and went to sea, but the ship, without waiting for the Sanitary Inspector or the Consul, put to sea again and steamed away, and the Sanitary Inspector and the Russian Consul returned without having reached alongside the ship.

As the incident took place in the Sanitary Office, and as behaviour of this sort in this town, where most of the people are uneducated and fanatic, could easily lead to dangerous results, I considered it necessary to bring the matter to your Excellency's notice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MOHAMMED HUSSAIN.

No. 164.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 664.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August* 16, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 628 of the 2nd instant, reporting upon the recent incident at Sikavi and the representations I had made to the Porte on the subject, I have the honour to state that I am informed by Captain Tyrrell that the instructions the Grand Vizier promised me he would send have been received by the local authorities at Moush, but that it would not appear that any serious steps are being taken in the direction indicated by them.

Captain Tyrrell says that the affair has been referred to the Judicial Court for an investigation, but that, as everything that happened will be set down to the insurgents, no satisfactory result can be anticipated from an inquiry conducted on such lines, whilst it is evident that the authorities are anxious to shield the malefactors.

Upon the receipt of Captain Tyrrell's telegram I made fresh representations at the Porte, and induced the Grand Vizier to telegraph again yesterday to the Moush authorities, calling for a specific report upon the conduct of the troops at Sikavi.

I on the same occasion hinted that it might be desirable to remove the Vali and the military Commandant. His Highness seemed rather to agree with my suggestion, and gave me to understand that he would see what could be done in this sense.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 165.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 666.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August* 16, 1904.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis telegraphed on the 12th instant that fighting had taken place between Armenian insurgents and Turkish troops, about five hours to the north of Bitlis, which had resulted in the destruction of two villages.

Mr. Heathcote is now able to modify his first report, and telegraphs that he learns that a few houses were burned, but that the villages were not destroyed. He adds that the Turkish losses are estimated at five men killed and nine wounded. The losses sustained by the insurgents are apparently not known, but the band is said to have retired to Mount Nimrud and to have escaped thence in boats.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 166.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 93. Consular.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August* 16, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, having asked me how long it was probable that he would have to remain at Moush, and whether, in the event of his visit extending over several weeks, he could not return to Van for ten days, I informed him that it was desirable that he should remain at Moush until matters had quieted down, but that if his presence was required at Van he could proceed thither, returning to Moush as soon as possible.

Captain Tyrrell now telegraphs that he personally is not anxious to return to Van, but that the missionaries there are pressing for his return. He adds that he has sent his dragoman to Van, and that he will return to him at Moush if all is going well, bringing such things as he stands in need of for a stay of a few weeks longer.

He further reports that the Vali of Bitlis has now left Moush for the former place.

Under the circumstances, I think it best to wait and see how events develop at Moush and Van before deciding definitely as to Captain Tyrrell's further movements.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 167.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 20.)

(No. 669.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August* 20, 1904.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis having expressed to me, in reporting the return of the French Consul to that place from Moush, his appreciation of the cordial and valuable assistance rendered to him by that officer in his negotiations with the Turkish officials during his recent sojourn at Moush, I informed the French Chargé d'Affaires of the great pleasure it had given me to receive Mr. Heathcote's report of his good relations with M. Robin.

I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of M. Bapst's reply, in which he tells me that M. Robin has also expressed his appreciation of the excellent relations which existed between himself and Mr. Heathcote, and of the assistance the latter had rendered him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 167.

M. Bapst to Sir N. O'Conor.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Thérapia, le 20 Août*, 1904.

J'AI reçu la lettre de votre Excellence en date du 12 courant par laquelle elle veut bien me transmettre les remerciments du Vice-Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique à Bitlis pour le concours que notre Agent lui a prêté pendant la durée de son séjour.

De mon côté, je suis heureux de faire savoir à votre Excellence que M. Robin n'a eu qu'à se féliciter des relations cordiales qu'il a entretenues avec M. Heathcote pendant sa mission à Mouch et à Bitlis, et de l'aide qu'il a trouvée en toutes circonstances auprès de son collègue Anglais.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) EDMOND BAPST.

No. 168.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 29.)

(No. 670.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August 23, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting that one or two fresh Armenian insurrectionary bands are stated to have recently passed Akhlat, on their way towards the Moush district from the Russian frontier.

Mr. Heathcote says that, from this and other rumours that have reached him, there would appear to be some reason to apprehend a revival of the Armenian insurrectionary movement.

I spoke to the Grand Vizier on the subject yesterday, and was assured that instructions would be sent to the local authorities to be more vigilant, and, at the same time, not to relax in any way the relief measures that were required for the most indigent of the population, who had suffered during the late insurrectionary outbreak in the Talori district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 168.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 38.)
Sir, *Bitlis, August 9, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, according to rumour, one or two new bands of insurgents have recently passed Akhlat on their way from the Russian border towards Moush.

It is suspected also that some such persons are concealed in Bitlis, and there is a certain amount of apprehension among Armenians here as to the probable attitude of the Moslems in case of any conflict arising out of police searches, or in any other way.

Towards the end of July two Armenians were found hanged at Tukh, near the lake, and one at Nol, in the Guzel Déré, east of Bitlis. Papers had been attached to the corpses, declaring that the men had been executed as traitors by order of the Committees. Taking these rumours with the untrustworthy reports which arrive here from Moush, it would seem that there has been a revival of revolutionary activity.

It is believed here that insurgents murdered a leading Moslem and his family, and attacked the troops near the Euphrates Bridge, north-west of Moush, and that, either in the fighting which ensued or out of revenge, four villages have been plundered and destroyed, but with regard to what may have happened in that neighbourhood your Excellency is doubtless fully informed by Captain Tyrrell, and it would therefore be useless for me to transmit what are merely unconfirmed rumours.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 169.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received August 29.)

(No. 673.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August 23, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 634 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, reporting on the visit paid by the British fleet to that port and on the reception accorded to the Commander-in-chief and officers by the Governor-General, Khalil Pasha.

At a recent audience which I had with the Sultan I expressed to His Imperial Majesty my acknowledgments of his courtesy in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 169.

Mr. Drummond Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 58.)
Sir, *Aley, Lebanon, August 12, 1904.*

WITH reference to my telegrams *en clair* regarding movements of the fleet under Admiral Sir Compton Domvile, I have the honour to report that the visit to Tripoli of the cruiser division under Rear-Admiral Sir Baldwin Walker was partly connected with an inspection of the "Victoria" Cemetery, several years having now elapsed since a war ship visited that place.

This division will, I am informed, proceed thence to Famagusta and Kyrenia before rejoining the fleet at Marmorice.

The dinner and reception given by the Governor-General, Khalil Pasha, to the Commander-in-chief and officers of the fleet, as reported in my despatch No. 57 of the 28th July, took place on the 6th August in a spacious garden attached to the private residence of the Governor, and was brilliantly illuminated for the occasion. The party was attended by about 150 officers, of whom 44 were invited to the dinner composed of 70 covers.

On the 9th August the Commander-in-chief gave a return dinner on board the flag-ship to the Governor-General, with his staff and chief officials, when the twenty-two war ships in harbour were illuminated in honour of the anniversary of the King's Coronation.

The visit of the British fleet to this coast and the special instructions issued to the Vali regarding their reception have produced an excellent effect on Turkish officials and on all classes of the population in Beirout and throughout Syria. The arrival of a large fleet in port is always welcomed by the public as a source of considerable revenue to many classes of the trading population, and British war ships in particular are very popular owing to the reputation of both officers and bluejackets for liberality.

I understand that the expenses of the Vali's party have amounted to about 400*l.*, and that they will not be borne by the local Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 170.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 311.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, September 1, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 304 of the 16th ultimo on the subject of the interview which I had with the Armenian Archbishops, I transmit to your Excellency herewith, for your information, copy of a letter which I have received from M. Hagopian,* who accompanied the two Prelates, and of the reply which has been returned to him.

I should be glad to receive any observations which your Excellency may have to offer on the subject of the "mission" of the Archbishops, and of the assertions made by M. Hagopian.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 171.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 2.)

(No. 139.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, September 2, 1904.*

NEWS has been received from Van to the effect that serious disturbances, caused by the insurgents, have broken out.

I have instructed Captain Tyrrell to return to his post at once.

No. 172.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 5.)

(No. 687.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, August 27, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, reporting the founding of a Russian monastery in Palestine at Ain Farah, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 172.

Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 44.)

Sir, *Jerusalem, July 29, 1904.*

MR. ACTING CONSUL MONAHAN, in his despatch No. 51 of the 1st October, 1900, reported to your Excellency the departure for Egypt of Mgr. Photios, the newly-appointed Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria, whose nomination had been opposed by Russia, and in previous correspondence, but more especially in my despatch No. 51, Confidential, of the 19th August, 1899, I had the honour to acquaint your Excellency with the action of Russia in interfering in the affairs of the Greek Patriarchate in Jerusalem.

I now beg to transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a *pro-memorid* which was handed to me a few days ago by the Secretary of the Greek Patriarchate, after a conversation he had had with me, on the subject of an attempt recently made by the Russian clergy, with the support of the Russian Government, to establish a lavra of Russian monks at a place called Ain Farah, about two hours' distance north-east of Jerusalem.

It would appear that a Russian monk from the Monastery of Pantélimon, of Mount Athos, named Positheos, together with two other monks from the same place, purchased, in the month of January last, with the assistance of the Russian Consulate-

* No. 155.

General, the ruins of an ancient church and convent situated at Ain Farah, a ravine somewhat difficult of access, but in which a copious spring of good water exists, which afterwards makes its way into the Jordan Valley.

As the monks of Mount Athos are considered Ottoman subjects, and as, moreover, according to the rules of the Greek Church, no monk is permitted to acquire property in his own name, the monk Dositheos purchased the ruins in his pre-sacerdotal name of Demetrius Popoff, and, under this designation, possesses the property as a Russian subject, and has the assistance and protection of the Russian Consulate-General. A lavra, or retreat, of Russian monks, members of the Greek Orthodox Church, has accordingly been founded in Palestine.

The Greek Patriarchate in this city has protested energetically against such a proceeding before the Turkish authorities, in the Russian Consulate-General, and at the Patriarchate of Constantinople; (1) on the ground that the establishing of such a monastery within the limits of its jurisdiction by monks belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church without the concurrence of the Church is contrary to the canons of the Church; and (2) because the ruins in question have always been claimed by the Greek Patriarchate, and, therefore, the purchase is looked upon as illegal.

The main objection, however, to the founding of this monastery of Russian monks, which has perturbed the minds of the Greek Patriarch and the members of his Synod in Jerusalem to such a degree that they have protested at the risk of losing their revenues from Russia, is that it is a first step towards the introduction into Palestine of Russian monasteries, which would soon be filled by Russian monks, who, belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church, like the ordinary Greek monks, with this difference, that they would enjoy Russian protection, will very soon claim a share in the administration of the affairs of the Patriarchate. Russia would thus secure a preponderating influence in the control of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which she has hitherto endeavoured to obtain over the minds of the native followers of the Greek Church, and the *status quo*, which for so many years past has been maintained by Christian nations with respect to the Holy Sepulchre, will be subverted. The Greek Patriarchate in Jerusalem therefore considers that the Ottoman Government should make every effort to oppose these advances on the part of Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 172.

Pro-Memorià *sur l'Affaire de Ain Pharra.*

VERS le mois de Janvier de l'année courante trois moines Russes du Mont Athos ont acheté les ruines de l'ancienne laure de l'Abbé Chariton, sise près de la source d'Aïn Pharra, deux heures environ au nord-est de Jérusalem. Les Russes procédèrent à cet achat dans le but de reconstruire l'ancienne laure et d'y installer de nombreux moines de leurs compatriotes; afin de pouvoir se prévaloir avantageusement de leur Consulat, ils se servirent de leur nom et de leur nationalité laïques (Russes). Les moines du Mont Athos étant considérés comme sujets Ottomans, aussi un des acheteurs porte-t-il sur les titres de propriété le nom de Démètre Popoff, tandis qu'en sa qualité de moine il se nomme Dosithée.

Le Patriarcat Orthodoxe a protesté énergiquement auprès du Gouvernement Ottoman, du Consulat de Russie, et du Patriarcat Œcuménique, d'où relèvent les susdits moines, (1°) contre leur installation dans les limites de la juridiction d'une Église qui n'est pas la leur, les saints canons de l'Église interdisant formellement pareil procédé, et (2) contre l'achat même des ruines qu'il revendique comme sa propre propriété, ce qui est prouvé par le témoignage des paysans des environs. Il serait à noter que le Chéik Ali, qui a vendu l'immeuble à Démètre Popoff, ne s'est déclaré propriétaire que quelques jours seulement avant la vente, dans le but évident de partager avec les habitants du village d'Ananta le prix qu'il toucherait de cet acte illégal.

Tout en formulant ces protestations, le Patriarcat, en vertu du Bérat Patriarcal, qui lui confère le droit d'expulsion de tout moine se trouvant sans autorisation dans son ressort, a exigé l'éloignement des perturbateurs et la restitution des ruines.

Toutefois, malgré ces protestations les moines du Mont Athos, sous la protection avouée du Consulat de Russie, entourèrent l'emplacement d'un enclos, rendirent

habitables les grottes qui s'y trouvent, élevèrent des constructions en zinc, tracèrent des routes d'accès—tout ceci avec une rapidité fébrile.

Il est à peine nécessaire d'ajouter que ce coup de main est de la plus haute importance pour le *statu quo* ecclésiastique et, par conséquent, politique de la Palestine.

Les manœuvres de la Société Russe de Palestine se sont démontrées insuffisantes à servir les plans Russes en Orient. D'autre part, l'expérience de conquérir par le froc ayant réussi au Mount Athos, il a été jugé utile d'étendre le programme en Palestine, où la sainteté de l'endroit et le prétexte du pélérinage au Saint-Sépulcre sont de bon aloi, et donnent des chances d'un plus prompt et plus grand succès.

C'est à la possession par les moines que les Russes visent; aussi ont-ils acheté déjà plusieurs endroits propices à la création de grands couvents, d'une capacité de plusieurs milliers de moines, ainsi qu'ils sont d'habitude les monastères Russes conformément à leurs vues politiques.

Si ces premières démarches venaient à leur réussir, il y aura en Palestine dans un bien proche avenir plusieurs lauras Russes avec des milliers des moines qui, faisant partie des ouailles du Patriarcat, auront fatalement leur part dans son administration, ce qui aura comme résultat direct le changement de *statu quo* ecclésiastique, ainsi qu'il s'est passé au Couvent de Saint-Pantéléïmon au Mont Athos.

Les Russes savent que, d'après les lois canoniques, les objections du Patriarcat et son opposition contre leur projet sont d'une importance capitale; aussi se sont-ils pris par de moyens non officiels en se servant des moines du Mont Athos; par conséquent, une fois le Patriarcat dûment soutenu le plan échoue, et il leur passera plusieurs années pour essayer une nouvelle tentative.

La protestation énergique du Patriarcat n'a nullement été atténuée ni influencée par l'emprunt de 400,000 roubles qui lui a été simultanément accordé par le Gouvernement Russe dans le but de la reconstruction du Presbytère du Saint-Sépulcre à Moscou, ni par une retenue fort probable de ses revenus en Russie, de la part de cette dernière, revenus qui constituent les trois quarts de la totalité de ses biens en général, ce qui démontre d'une façon péremptoire l'importance attribuée par le Patriarcat aux agissements Russes.

La Sublime Porte, instruite sur l'affaire, en comprend l'importance, mais elle se sent le besoin d'être secondée pour s'opposer avec succès aux pressions de la diplomatie Russe.

No. 173.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 5.)

(No. 693.)

My Lord, *Therapia, August 30, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of an interesting despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, temporarily employed at Moush, reviewing the general situation in the Armenian provinces of Asia Minor, and stating the opinion that remedial measures must be introduced if it is desired to avert the gradual extermination of the Christians in those regions.

I have replied to Captain Tyrrell in a despatch of which a copy is herewith inclosed. Though it is not my intention to advance any far-reaching measure of reform which, without the co-operation of Russia and other Powers, could not fail to be abortive, yet I think the moment is propitious for supporting some practical administrative reforms, of which I am convinced the Sublime Porte now fully appreciate the necessity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 173.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 8. Moush.)

Sir, *Moush, August 13, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 9th August six Armenians were killed at the village of Koms, about two and a-half hours north-west of Moush.

I have already reported in my No. 6, Moush, the affair there on the 22nd July, when a Mussulman landowner called Haji Ali was killed.

This second outrage appears to have been an act of revenge, or retaliation, for his death; and the Armenians say that the murderer was a Kurd called Mehmed Emin, one of Haji Ali's servants.

It appears that in broad daylight, about noon, the Kurd appeared and shot five men and one woman, one after another, whom he found at work in the fields, away from the village.

I visited the village to make inquiries.

The villagers complained that Mehmed Emin and an accomplice (another Kurd called Devresh) were still at large, and were running about the country with the intention of killing every Armenian they met; that though these two men were nominally outlaws, the zaptiehs and soldiers made no attempt to apprehend them; that when the affair occurred the villagers appealed to the officers of the company of infantry stationed in the village to interfere with the murderer, but were met with the reply that there was no order to do so; and that they were now afraid to go into the fields and attend to their harvesting operations, and that their crops were therefore being spoiled.

The soldiers give a different account. They say that the murders took place in the fields far from the village, and that though they went out at once they could not catch the outlaws; that they send out patrols daily to prevent them approaching again, and to give the villagers security to work in their fields, but that the latter, through obstinacy, and to make the worst of it, pretend there is no protection, and will not go out and work, so as to have a grievance.

Contradictory statements were all that I had expected, and in these visits of inquiry I usually have to draw my own conclusions from extraneous evidence, when it is forthcoming, as to who is lying, and how much.

As I rode up the hill from the village towards the church, around which the soldiers are encamped, I asked the villagers who were complaining to me whether they went to church in these days. They replied at once: "You go and see the state of the church. How can we?" implying that it had been defiled, or was being put to improper uses, by the soldiers. When I entered it I found that it was perfectly clean, with the usual ornaments, &c., intact, and that it had apparently not been tampered with in any way.

This made me inclined to put all the villagers' statements down as exaggerations.

On the other hand, as I left the village a zaptieh who accompanied me said that the officers told nothing but lies, that no patrols were sent out, &c. Coming from such a source, this might have been taken as a confirmation of the villagers' story, but I have noticed that this particular zaptieh dislikes the soldiers, and always says the same things about them.

Through it all, three facts appear to be clear:—

1. That the murderers are the outlaws, Mehmed Emin and Devresh.

2. That they are still at large, though it ought not to be difficult to catch, try, and punish them if the authorities wish to do so.

3. That the soldiers failed to carry out their ostensible duty here, viz., the protection of the villagers, though there was absolutely nothing to show that they are not behaving properly in the village.

On my return to Moush I spoke to the Mutessarif, and was assured that active search would be made for the outlaws, and that if the evidence showed they were the murderers, they would be punished accordingly.

I also mentioned my suspicions as to the laissez-faire policy of the soldiers to the Ferik, who declared that it was impossible, as they knew they were there to protect the villagers and not merely to live at ease in the village.

On the 11th instant an Armenian was murdered by a Kurd at the village of Shimlak, three hours east of Moush. I saw the body. The man had evidently been shot from above, and at very close quarters, the bullet entering the right breast, and passing out under the left ribs, while the clothes were burned by the flash. There were also three dagger wounds in the abdomen, probably inflicted after death. As it is necessary in these cases to have the corpse officially examined, I had the body brought into Moush and forced it upon the attention of the authorities. After the necessary formalities had been complied with, they assured me that inquiry would be made, the murderer honestly sought for, &c. In this case also, according to the Armenians, the murderer is known.

Ever since the Gravi affair the Alai Bey, Izzet Bey, has been traversing the plain with gendarmes, searching every village for arms. Naturally, the Armenians do not like this, and the complaints I receive of his conduct and methods are innumerable. Though I have not been able so far to catch him red-handed, or to see a man with

the marks of ill-treatment upon his body; I think there is little doubt but that these beatings are inflicted.

However, the fact is that the Alai Bey's vigorous methods have produced a large quantity of hidden rifles (he sent in no less than ninety-three this morning), a circumstance quite sufficient to justify them in the eyes of the authorities. Also, it must be remembered that in this country most people are accustomed to being beaten before they pay their taxes, and that most of these, again, will not pay their taxes, even if they can, until they are beaten. In a still greater degree is a beating required before they will own to the possession of a forbidden rifle, or give it up.

I believe that among the revolutionists' papers which fell into the hands of the Turks in Shenik, Semal, Gelli Guzan, and other villages were lists showing every Armenian, both in Sasun and in the villages of the plain, who was in possession of a rifle or gun of some sort.

Thus the Alai Bey has something to work on, and, finding that many of the men have rifles according to the lists, he believes that they all have, and it is probable that those mentioned who cannot produce rifles are considered to be concealing them, and are beaten accordingly.

Izzet Bey is particularly hated by the Armenians, which makes their reports about him even less reliable than usual; and his undoubted success in finding these contraband guns tends to still further embitter their complaints. Much inquiry, and a little personal knowledge, leads me to the belief that he is a good official from the Turkish point of view.

A very strict Mussulman, unusually truthful and honest, he is perhaps the more inclined to be hard upon Christians, but I think only to the extent of what he conceives to be his duty. That his work is appreciated by the Government is shown by the fact that he has just been granted the rank of Mir-i-Miran, and so is now Izzet Pasha. Having been sent here with a special object, and being here still in connection with the recent events which have arisen from the revolutionary movement of this year, I have abstained from going into questions of misgovernment, reform, old abuses, &c., in my despatches, and I confine myself, as far as possible, to questions connected with, or arising from, this year's events, and the resettlement of the refugees. In this narrow limit I consider the Armenians are as much to blame as the Turks, and that a great deal of their present trouble is due to themselves. Information from Armenian sources is absolutely untrustworthy—no exaggeration is too great, no story too palpably absurd, to be put before a foreign Consul, who is, too, looked upon by the Armenians, as I have before explained, in quite a wrong light. This is a great pity, and makes the work of helping them much harder than it ought to be.

But, outside the immediate question of this year's events, I must state that the Armenians are in a very bad way. Their grievances are many and just, and they are existing under a quite impossible régime. It is an old story, and one which has doubtless been reported regularly to your Excellency from most of the Consulates in this country for some years past.

The Turkish Government may not have the idea of gradually exterminating the Armenians, but that is the process which is, by slow degrees, going on. In nearly every quarterly report which I send from the Van Vilayet I have to allude to oppressive and ever-increasing taxation, to the hold which Mussulmans are allowed to get upon Christian villages, to the fact that Kurds can act lawlessly towards Christians, and oppress them with very little fear of being brought to book, &c. All this is going on in the Moush Sandjak, but it has advanced several stages further here than in the Van Vilayet, taken as a whole. I feel that nothing can be done to stop it until the whole system of the Turkish Government is altered; and my object, here, in Moush, is simply to see a return to the conditions which obtained before this year's events.

But, after that, if only the revolutionists and their sympathizers will allow things to settle down so far, reform must come, and the whole system of government here must be swept away or put under European supervision, if the Christians are not to disappear.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain*.

Inclosure 2 in No. 173.

Sir N. O'Conor to Vice-Consul Tyrrell.

Sir, *Therapia, August 30, 1904.*

I HAVE received and read with great interest your despatch No. 8, Mousli, of the 13th August, and other despatches, on the situation in the Armenian provinces of Turkey.

With reference to your remarks respecting the necessity of reforms, I should be glad if, without attempting to codify or reduce to paper even the more essential of the many reform proposals which have been at various times elaborated by the European Powers, you should submit to me such proposals as you may consider most likely to meet the end which I believe the Sublime Porte has just now almost as much in view as ourselves. The Ottoman Government appears at this moment to be sincerely desirous to see an improvement in the situation of affairs in Armenia, and has during the late events acted with such promptitude and vigour as to lead me to believe that the moment is favourable for supporting some simple and practical remedial measures.

Personally, I am inclined to think that a reorganization of the police and the gendarmerie is probably the most urgent and efficacious measure, and one best worthy of support, but I will await the receipt of the conclusions to which your intimate knowledge of the country and your recent experience will lend so much value.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 174.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 5.)

(No. 695.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August 30, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 670 of the 23rd instant, upon the subject of an apparent revival of the insurrectionary movement in the Bitlis district, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at that place, reporting upon a fight which occurred on the 14th instant at a village called Shamiran, situated between Mount Nimrud and Mount Kerkur.

In this despatch Mr. Heathcote alludes to a belief prevalent at Bitlis that Ferid Bey, the Vali of the vilayet, has sent in his resignation, and expresses an opinion that such a step might well be for the advantage of the province, since the Vali has not proved himself a successful administrator.

I concur with Mr. Heathcote that Ferid Bey has shown himself to be an incapable official, and I have at various times pointed out his shortcomings to the Grand Vizier, and urged, unofficially, that he should be replaced by a more able officer before we were compelled to formally demand his dismissal. Ferid's previous record, and more especially his very suspicious action in connection with the massacres here in 1896, when he was a high officer of police, should have sufficed to prevent his appointment to the post of Vali of Bitlis. I understand that when the appointment was made, the candidates put forward by the Grand Vizier for the post were passed over, and Ferid's candidature supported by his patrons at the Palace.

The French Chargé d'Affaires has expressed his willingness to support any formal representation I might make for Ferid's dismissal, but the Russian Ambassador, when I approached him on the subject, seemed disinclined to take similar action.

Since the date of Mr. Heathcote's inclosed despatch he has informed me by telegram that two companies of troops left Bitlis on the 23rd instant for the north, and that it was believed that the insurgents who had been concerned in the affair at Shamiran had seized the Island of Akhtamar in Lake Van, whilst it was stated that the Acting Catholicos, who lives on the mainland opposite the above-mentioned island, had telegraphed to Van for assistance. A later telegram reports that the land are believed to have left the island and gone to the district of Akhlat.

Upon the receipt of these telegrams I caused inquiry to be made at the Porte as

to whether they had any cognizance of such a movement, and I am informed, in reply, that the statements contained in Mr. Heathcote's telegrams are borne out by the official reports received. The Armenian Patriarch has also similar information.

It would appear from what I learn from the Porte that the band concerned in the fighting at Shamiran crossed in a boat to the Island of Akhtamar and from thence proceeded to Akarank, the residence on the mainland of the Catholicos, and that by dint of threats of violence they succeeded in extracting a certain sum of money from the Acting Catholicos.

On the appearance, however, of troops, the band took to flight, some twenty of them recrossing the lake to the neighbourhood of Akhlat, whilst the remainder dispersed in the Kazas of Kharish and Khizan, where they are being hunted by the troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 174.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 11.)
Sir, *Bitlis, August* 16, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 38 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report that a fight occurred on the 11th instant at Shamiran, a village between Mount Nimrud and Mount Kirkur, some five hours north of Bitlis.

It appears that a large party of Seyaré gendarmes were returning from the Akhlat district, under the command of Cherkess Ali Bey, about whom I am reporting separately, and that on receipt of information of the presence of insurgents in the village they turned aside to encounter them, and were joined later by the soldiers from Alamet Khan on the Rahwa Plateau.

Accounts vary, as usual, as to which side made the attack, but fighting began as soon as the gendarmes reached the village, and continued for several hours. The authorities admit that they lost one man killed and three or four wounded, and Armenians believe the Turkish casualities to be five killed and nine wounded, and say that the insurgents, who may have numbered sixty men, had three wounded.

It was at first reported that the village had been totally destroyed, together with the neighbouring one of Cherkur, but later accounts tend to confirm the official statement that two houses were burnt, while the Protestant chapel, which appears to have been held by the insurgents, received two cannon balls, which practically destroyed the building.

It is believed that the insurgents retreated into the Nimrud crater, and some say that they left the district by boat the next day.

It is probably on account of this incident that the Vali has left Moush, where he has been since his visit to Sasun in April and May, and is expected here to-day. It is generally believed that he has tendered his resignation, and will shortly leave Constantinople, and this belief is in some measure confirmed by his language at Moush to Dr. Norton, American Consul at Kharput, who is now here.

If this is the case, I venture to think that it may well be for the advantage of the province, for Farid Bey has not succeeded in improving its condition. His constant professions of good intentions may perhaps be sincere, but in that case he has allowed himself to be far too easily deceived by his subordinates, whose first reports, however partial, he has always been disposed to accept as final.

If his resignation be accepted, I trust that a new Governor may be appointed and sent here with the least possible delay, for there is no hope of any progress under a series of acting officials, however well meaning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

P.S.—There are rumours of a rebel concentration in Gargar, a short distance over the Van border, and of the appearance of insurgents in various villages nearer to Bitlis, but all these are vague and unconfirmed.

W. J. H.

No. 175.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 5.)

(No. 607. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August* 30, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, now at Moush, stating that he has been very careful not to encourage the idea among the revolutionaries that there is any chance of their action producing European intervention.

As reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 638 of the 9th instant, I suggested to Captain Tyrrell that he should invite his Russian colleague to accompany him on his visits to the villages. Your Lordship will perceive that Captain Tyrrell says that M. Shirkoff has refused such invitations, and that his conduct is such as to create a belief that he prefers to carry on his investigations independent of his British colleague.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 175.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 7. Confidential.)
Sir, *Moush, August* 11, 1904.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 6th August, I have the honour to note your Excellency's advice as to regulating my movements so as not to give any encouragement to the revolutionists' idea of provoking foreign intervention.

As I have pointed out in my despatches, this is no doubt the idea, not only of professed revolutionists, but of most of the Armenians about here, and this idea is at the root of all the disturbances.

I have all along been most careful not to encourage it in any way.

As to my asking my Russian colleague if he would like to accompany me, I have more than once urged him to come out with me to villages and see things with his own eyes, but he says he prefers to stay in his house. What I see I tell him, but he does not seem very anxious to have my news. I chanced to go up to his house one evening, and found the Vali and the Armenian Bishop there. M. Shirkoff then told me that he had asked them to meet there, so that he could discuss the situation with them both. If he desired my co-operation or wished that we should work together, he would certainly have asked me to be a party to this conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. G. TYRRELL.

No. 176.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 5.)

(No. 608.)
My Lord, *Therapia, August* 30, 1904.

IN my despatch No. 533 of the 4th ultimo, forwarding a report from Mr. Heathcote of an affray which took place at Dirkavank, near Moush, on the 19th June last, it was stated that a wounded revolutionist, said to be a Russian officer, had been found in one of the houses of the village.

I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, now at Moush, informing me that, having failed to obtain satisfactory intelligence respecting the military operations in the Sasun and Talori districts, he had addressed himself, with the permission of the Vali, to this Russian prisoner in the hope that his military education might render him

Damocles, &c. As for the fact that the refugees from Gelli Genemán and Gelli Missir are being settled in other villages, he has himself admitted to me that the authorities were acting in this matter within the law, and that it was useless to make it a subject of complaint. Otherwise I was prepared to take it up.

Regarding the villages mentioned in the second paragraph, it is quite untrue that the events there commenced by attacks by soldiers and Kurds; while the "complètement pillés" and "plus de quatre-vingt personnes tuées" are gross exaggerations.

I will prepare a statement of exactly what has happened in these five villages.

Finally, he says that "le nombre des misérables s'élève à 18,000"—a vague statement which would read well in the European newspapers, but which can only be justified if every Armenian under Turkish rule is reckoned a "misérable."

Then, indeed, all the inhabitants of Moush Plain may be so described; but the telegram is so worded that this should be construed to mean the number of people who are actually destitute and in need of relief.

I think the Bishop's attitude is very much to be regretted, and it is small wonder that the Turks regard his official residence in Moush as a centre of disaffection.

There seems to be no doubt that he and his advisers, like the armed revolutionists, would like to force European intervention at any cost, and unscrupulously diverge from the truth in making statements suitable for foreign consumption.

This is not the way to render a service to his flock at the present time, and his attitude prevents him from helping the people as he might, if he were working loyally with the Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL.

Inclosure 2 in No. 177.

Draft of Telegram from Armenian Bishop of Moush to Armenian Patriarch in Constantinople.

J'AFFIRME mes lettres du 17 Juin et 7 Juillet décrivant le terrible état actuel du peuple Arménien de Sassoun et Daron. Vous savez déjà l'établissement des Sassountsis. Les habitants de Talvorig, et Khian aussi, ont gagné leurs montagnes par les soins dévoués et inoubliables de M. le Consul d'Angleterre, Captain Tyrrell. Seul, on ne permit pas encore de se placer aux montagnards de Guéliè-guénemou et Gélié-nissoure. Aucune des maisons n'est pas encore reconstruite. Le Gouvernement centralise tous ses efforts pour la construction des casernements.

Par chaque tête on remet 10 paras par jour, et cela ne suffit que pour pain bis.

Le versement du sang recommença dans la Plaine de Mousch pour cause des Fédais, à 7, 16 et 18 du courant; les soldats, gendarmes et Kurdes attaquèrent les villages Coms, Kouravon, Tzkhavon, Akhdjan, et Cheikh-Youssouff; les maisons et culture en partie incendiées, complètement pillées, plus de quatre-vingt personnes tuées; les paysans dispersés, sans secours. Les Kurdes des environs, les Turcs de la ville s'organisent, se préparent pour un massacre général. Pas d'exagération: c'est le cas du sabre de Damoclès.

Les Fédais peut-être existeront toujours, mais c'est le peuple innocent qui subit toutes conséquences. C'est le temps de moisson, les cultures sont menacées, le nombre des misérables s'élève à 18,000; l'automne et l'hiver s'approchent: il n'y aura pas de moyens de subsistances.

Le peuple insiste et prie que vous vous adressiez surtout aux Grandes Puissances pour le sauvegarder du péril certain. La situation est intolérable. Si un soulagement réel ne vient pas consoler le peuple, moi et l'assemblée mixte du prélat, nous démissionnerons [*sic*] pour ne rester pas l'inactif témoin du martyrisme du peuple.

Le 20 Juillet, 1904.

Inclosure 3 in No. 177.

Statement of what happened in Villages referred to in Inclosure 2.

Koms.—On the 22nd July, the house of one Haji Ali, a Moushli, was attacked. The assailants supposed to have been "Fedais" (Armenian revolutionists). Haji Ali, his nephew, servant, and two women were killed. Soldiers were immediately sent out and

remain in garrison in the village. Six houses burnt, one stack of corn and one of grass. No Armenians killed; no property looted.

Kouravon (Gravi).—Fully reported in my No. 2, Moush, of the 1st August. Only one villager was killed, and that during the fighting. The village was fired in several places (by the revolutionists), and consequently a great part of it has been burnt. The church was destroyed by the soldiers. The people all left the village for some days; they have now returned. Many of their cattle missing, but the Government has found and restored some and is searching for the others.

Ezkhavon (Sikavi).—Fully reported in my No. 2, Moush, of the 1st August. Soldiers killed thirty-two people here. Inhabitants have now returned. No houses burnt and no cattle or property missing.

Akchan.—As reported in my No. 3, Moush, of the 2nd August. No one killed in the village. A few barns and out-buildings burnt (by the revolutionists). Inhabitants have returned, and no cattle or property missing; but men of this village were undoubtedly fighting on the day of the Gravi affair, and at least three Akchandis were killed in Sheikh Yussuf.

Sheikh Yussuf.—It was here that, after the Gravi affair, the Alai Bey and the gendarmes came up with some of the revolutionists and killed them all. Statements of number killed vary from seven to ten. Turks say they were all revolutionists; Armenians that only three were armed and the remainder unarmed men. It would seem that Kurds participated in this attack, though it is denied by the Turks. The church was burnt. Inhabitants are now back in the village, and say that all missing cattle and property has been restored, except two horses and thirty sheep and certain utensils and small articles which were carried off by Kurds. I have spoken to the authorities about this.

(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL.

Moush, August 8, 1904.

No. 178.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 318.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 6, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 93, Consular, of the 16th August, reporting communications with His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, as to the length of his stay at Moush.

I concur in the view expressed in the last paragraph of your Excellency's despatch, that it will be best to wait and see how events develop at Moush and Van before deciding definitely as to Captain Tyrrell's further movements.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 179.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 319.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 6, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 657 of the 16th August reporting a conversation with the Armenian Patriarch as to the reports which had been communicated by him to newspaper correspondents relative to extensive massacres of Armenians and as to the amount of reliance which can be placed upon them.

Your language to Mgr. Ormanian has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 180.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 12.)

(No. 712.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September 6, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, on the 27th ultimo, a demonstration by Redifs, recently returned from Macedonia, took place at Konia against the local authorities.

These soldiers, after having been under arms for 16 or 17 months, had been sent home without any pay but with the promise that they should be paid at Konia.

On their arrival they demanded their arrears of pay—that is, one medjidieh (3*s.* 6*d.*) per month. As the Government still delayed and gave them to understand that in any case their total demands would not be paid, they assembled in the square in front of the Governor's palace and demanded to be paid immediately and in full.

On gendarmes attempting to disperse them the former were attacked and much excitement ensued. Eventually the troops, having forced the Vali to release two of their comrades who had been kept as hostages, dispersed, shouting that they would repeat their demands unless paid shortly.

The Vali is reported to have telegraphed to Constantinople for instructions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 181.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 12.)

(No. 715.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September 6, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 693 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, now at Moush, reporting that all is quiet in the plain, and that the revolutionists have departed.

Captain Tyrrell states that only one band of revolutionists is now supposed to remain, numbering about sixty men, and that they were last heard of on the island of Akhtamar, in Lake Van. From this information it would appear as if the band which acted at Sikavi has united with the band implicated in the Shatirvan affair, the men concerned in the incident at the latter place being known to have retreated to Akhtamar, as has already been reported to your Lordship.

It will be noticed that Captain Tyrrell states that he has not had any complaints made to him of ill-treatment at the hands of Turkish soldiery substantiated, except at Gravi and Ervan, where he examined men who had been subjected to brutal handling by individual soldiers and "seyyar" zaptiehs.

The "seyyar" gendarmes are mostly Circassians. I yesterday drew the attention of the Grand Vizier to the reports I had received of their behaviour in the Moush Plain, and pointed out to his Highness the danger of having such a semi-military force without proper control. I said that I had reason to believe that these men, under strict discipline and reorganized by foreign officers, would probably provide splendid material for the maintenance of public order, whereas under existing circumstances they are a danger to the inhabitants.

The Grand Vizier replied that he had no knowledge of the corps, but would make inquiries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 181.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 11.)
Sir, *Moush, August 22, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that things have been very quiet in Moush Plain during the past week. It seems certain that the revolutionists have departed, for the present at least, and as long as the Turks do not suspect their presence the villagers have nothing to fear.

It is now supposed that there is only one band of revolutionists remaining, and this includes the two leaders, Antranik and Kevork.

According to reports here, it consists of about sixty men, and was last heard of on the island of Akhtamar, in Lake Van. This is the band which was at Gravi on the 29th July. It then consisted of thirty-five men.

The Alai Bey, Izzet Pasha, continues his search for hidden arms in the villages of the plain, and has collected more rifles. I have met him in two villages during the week, and watched his methods without seeing anything to complain of.

I have also revisited the villages of Sheikh Yussuf, Akchan, Gravi, Sikavi, Ervan, and Koms, to investigate specific complaints made by the inhabitants in written petitions to me.

In most cases the tales of beatings and tortures appear to have been pure fabrications. The villagers could not produce a single man bearing the marks of such treatment, and when I questioned them they contradicted the statements made in the petitions.

The exceptions were Gravi and Ervan. In these two villages I found several men injured, some bed-ridden, one or two with broken ribs and heads cut open, and all more or less severely bruised. In these cases rifles had been used as the instruments of castigation. One man had a knife wound in his thigh, and one or two had been barbarously handled, though not dangerously hurt, in the private parts. I carefully examined and noted all these cases. But the villagers said that it was not by the Alai Bey's orders that these things had occurred, and that it was the work of individual soldiers and of "seyyar" zaptiehs. They accused an infantry officer, whose name I cannot discover, and Azamet Bey, an officer of the seyyar gendarmerie, as responsible. I have no other evidence that these officers were concerned in what I take to have been simply instances of innate brutality on the part of the men.

When I told the Mutessarif what I had seen, he said that some of these cases had been reported to him, that he was very sorry about it, and that strict orders had been given to prevent them, if possible.

At the same time he assured me that neither the Alai Bey nor any of the officers knew of them at the time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. G. TYRRELL.

No. 182.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 12.)

(No. 716.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September 6, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith, in continuation of my telegram No. 130 of the 2nd instant, copy of a Memorandum furnished to me by Mr. Lamb, first Dragoman to His Majesty's Embassy, embodying the information he received at the Sublime Porte on the 3rd instant, respecting the recent disturbance reported from Van.

I spoke to the Grand Vizier yesterday upon this subject and impressed upon his Highness that the local authorities should be instructed to take all possible measures to put down the movement with the least possible loss of life, and that special care should be taken to prevent the Kurds from taking any part in the military proceedings.

The Grand Vizier replied that stringent instructions had been sent to the Vali in the sense desired, and that he had been informed that he would be held personally responsible for any disorders that might occur, and had been instructed to take the necessary steps to isolate the Kurds and prevent their interference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 182.

Memorandum by Mr. Lamb.

I ASKED the Grand Vizier this afternoon what news he had from Van.

His Highness replied that a band of more than 100 Armenian revolutionaries were known to have entered the gardens of Van with the intention of creating a disturbance on the 1st instant, the anniversary of the Sultan's accession. They betrayed their presence by opening fire upon a military patrol, killing one soldier.

The troops opened fire upon the house from which the shot came, but the revolutionaries escaped in the darkness to another hiding place.

He admitted that great anxiety existed in Van, but assured me that strict orders had been sent to the Vali and also to Zekki Pasha, to prevent Hamidiehs or other tribal Kurds from entering the place, and that no further disturbances had taken place either on the 1st or 2nd instant.

His Highness gave me to understand that, with the exception of the one soldier above-mentioned, there were no casualties, but I believe the French Embassy has received an account stating the loss of life as two soldiers and twenty civilians.

(Signed) H. H. LAMB.

September 3, 1904.

No. 183.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September* 12.)

(No. 717.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September* 6, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 695 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith extract of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting upon the recent affray at Shamiran. From this Report it would appear that the insurgents only lost 2 killed and 3 wounded, as against 14 soldiers killed.

I do not consider that the evidence furnished by Mr. Heathcote is sufficient to establish for certain that the Kurds participated in the conflict, and I am accordingly requesting him to make further inquiries on this point, and to report.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 183.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 42.)
(Extract.) *Bitlis, August* 23, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 41 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to submit the following particulars in amplification and correction of the previous account of the fighting at Shamiran. This information is mainly based on a private letter from Dr. Norton, the United States' Consul at Kharput, who visited the place on his way from here to Akhlat and Van.

A band of seventy-five insurgents from the direction of Moush came to Shamiran two days before the fight, and occupied the church (Gregorian, not Protestant) and two hills above the village. They seem to have made no attempt at concealment, and are even said to have hoisted flags over two of their positions. The troops established themselves on some heights commanding these, and held all the surrounding ground.

The villagers had fled, taking what properly they could before the soldiers arrived, and no lives were lost among them except that one woman was killed, while escaping, by a shot from the soldiers.

No cannon were used; but the fight lasted all day; 14 soldiers were killed, and the rebel losses were 2 killed and 3 wounded, but carried off in the retreat to Tadvan, which was effected in the evening.

Nineteen houses, just over half the village, were burnt, and the neighbouring village of Cherhur was plundered, everything being taken out of the houses, as well as some cattle.

The total number of troops and Kurds present is put at about 3,000, and the statements of the villagers on this point are confirmed by the experience of a European traveller, who found that the Kurds of some villages in the eastern part of the plain had gone off "to assist the Moslem villages in that direction, in case of an insurgent attack." I think, therefore, there can be no doubt that large numbers of Kurds took part in the affair, though this is, of course, denied by the authorities.

No. 184.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 320.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 13, 1904.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 695 of the 30th August, reporting rumours that Férid Bey may resign or be dismissed from his post as Vali of Bitlis.

I should wish to learn whether your Excellency considers that in this event it would be desirable to press the Sultan to appoint a carefully selected successor whose antecedents might justify the expectation that he would be competent for the post.

Your Excellency is perhaps in a position to ascertain what candidates are likely to be put forward, and your representations would have weight in securing the selection of the most promising among them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 185.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 321.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 14, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 693 of the 30th ultimo, forwarding a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van respecting the condition of Armenia and the necessity for the introduction of administrative reforms into that part of the Turkish Empire.

I approve the instructions which you have given to Captain Tyrrell on this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 186.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 323.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 14, 1904.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 669 of the 20th ultimo, relative to the cordial relations which have existed between His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis and his French colleague during their recent negotiations with the Turkish Government at Moush.

I have learnt with satisfaction of the excellent relations between Mr. Heathcote and M. Robin, and of the mutual assistance which they were able to render to each other.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 187.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 26.)

(No. 729.)
My Lord. *Constantinople, September 19, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus reporting on the opening of the Amman–Ma'an section of the Hedjaz Railway, and the composition of the Special Commission sent by the Sultan to represent His Majesty on the occasion of the inauguration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 187.

Consul Richards to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 46.)
Sir. *Damascus, September 8, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that a Special Commission sent by the Sultan to represent His Majesty on the occasion of the inauguration of that section of the Hedjaz Railway which has just been completed as far as Ma'an arrived in Damascus by a special train on the 28th ultimo.

The Commission consisted of Turkhan Pasha, ex-Foreign Minister, and member of the Shoura-i-Devlet (Privy Council); Rahmi Pasha, General of Division; Jevad Pasha, General of Brigade, and Aide-de-camp to His Imperial Majesty; Mustapha Bey, Chief Engineer in the Ministry of Public Works; Mohammed Ali Bey, son of Ahmed Izzet Pasha, Second Secretary to His Majesty the Sultan; Ali Bey, Principal Court Artist; a son of Tewfik Pasha (name unknown), Minister for Foreign Affairs; Ismail Bey and Ali Bey, Aides-de-camp to the Sultan; Ober (?) Pasha, General of Division; Mukhtar Bey, son of Hashim Pasha, Minister of Public Instruction; and fifty-eight other officials of various grades, and was also accompanied by a considerable number of correspondents of Constantinople newspapers, a band, and a numerous retinue of attendants and servants—150 persons in all. They were met at Ryak station, the junction for the Hamah branch of the line, by the Vali; the Mushir Commanding the 5th Army Corps; Mushir Kyazim Pasha, Director-General of the Hedjaz Railway Works; and a numerous body of all the highest officials in the vilayet, all in full uniform, who, having been conveyed thither by a special train, returned with the Commission to Damascus. I should state here that, as regards the honours paid to the latter, which were undoubtedly greater than any one of its members had any right to expect, the whole programme had been arranged at and dictated from the Palace, where it was considered that the Commission, being the direct representatives of the Sultan, should be treated accordingly.

On their arrival at Damascus they were met at the station by all the officers now in garrison here, in full uniform; all civil functionaries above the rank of "Sanieh," also in full uniform, and wearing their decorations; the whole of the police body, a military band, and thousands of spectators who lined the road the whole way from the station to Government House.

The Vali drove off first, amidst the cheers of the crowd, with Turkhan Pasha seated on his right-hand side, while the rest of the officials followed in a long string of carriages, all of which made their way to the Government House. In front of this building a halt was made in order that the Mufti might invoke the blessings of God on the great undertaking now in hand, as well as on His Majesty the Sultan, to whose beneficent inspiration it owes its being. At the conclusion of this ceremony, which was brief, all the guests were conducted to the various houses which had been prepared for their reception.

The members of the Commission spent one whole day at Damascus, and on the morning of the 30th ultimo they proceeded to Ma'an by the Hedjaz Railway in four special trains, being accompanied by the Mushir Kyazim Pasha, in the first train, the second, third, and fourth trains being under the special direction of Abdurrahman Pasha, the Muhdiz-el-Hadj, Mohammed Pasha Adlmi (a member of the local Hedjaz Railway Commission), and the Emir Ali Pasha, son of the late Emir Abdul Kader, respectively.

In addition to the personnel of the Commission, taken in its widest sense, and the personages just mentioned, the trains contained some 250 persons (nearly all Moslems, although no distinction as to religion was confessedly made), who had either been specially invited by the Vali to attend the ceremony, or who had applied for and received tickets of invitation. Some few of them had come from Beyrout. The conveyance of all the guests was, of course, gratuitous.

On the following day (the 1st September), being the anniversary of the Sultan's accession, the usual official receptions were held in the morning by the Vali and the Mushir, while at Ma'an the inaugural ceremony which the Commission had come to celebrate was performed with all the pomp and circumstance which are habitual on such occasions. If the three battalions of troops which have been employed on the construction of the line and some 500 Bedouin and fellaheen be included, it has been calculated that about 4,000 persons were present at the ceremony. Three persons had been delegated to represent the city of Medina, the chief of whom, however, the Mufti, had been unable, owing to old age and indisposition, to continue the journey beyond the well-known village of Mudain Salih (on the Hadj route), so that the person next him in rank, a certain Sheikh Mohammed Hammad (a member of the Ashraf, lineal descendants of the Prophet), took his place and recited the usual invocatory prayer, which he followed by a speech. Turkhan Pasha made the next speech, and was in turn followed by Kyazim Pasha and seventeen other persons of various degrees of importance. Turkhan Pasha is said to have expressed the Sultan's very great satisfaction at the remarkable progress recently made in the construction of the line, the patient endurance, industry, and skill of all those who had collaborated in this great undertaking and the highly praiseworthy zeal, intelligence, and devotion to their Sovereign which had been displayed by the Vali, the Mushir Hacki Pasha, Kyazim Pasha, and others.

Kyazim Pasha, who spoke next, said that although in reality only a fourth of the whole distance to Mecca [about 1,800 kilom. (1,125 miles)] had actually been covered, or, to adopt another method of reckoning, a third of the distance to Medina, yet he considered that, in view of the magnitude of the natural and other obstacles already surmounted and the relative insignificance of such difficulties and obstacles which they would be called upon to encounter in the future, one-half of the whole enterprise might fairly be held to have been successfully accomplished. He had no hesitation, therefore, in giving it as his opinion that in three or four years they would reach the term of their labours. None of the other speeches made, so far as I can ascertain, contained anything worthy of special mention.

A banquet was subsequently served in a specially prepared tent to the members of the Commission and their official hosts from Damascus, while the remaining guests, and even, I understand, many of the spectators, were liberally entertained either in other tents or in the open air. At the conclusion of the meal 100 medals in nickel, setting forth, on the obverse, that they had been struck in memory of the completion of the Damascus–Ma'an section of the Hedjaz Railway, and representing, on the reverse, a locomotive, were distributed to the principal spectators.

The Commission, which, I should state, was conveyed to Ma'an in twenty-eight hours, returned to Damascus on the 3rd instant, the journey having been accomplished in twenty-six hours. The degree of speed attained on the return journey works out at 31 miles an hour, which, considering that the rails were only just laid, that over a considerable proportion of the new section no ballast has as yet been placed, that many of the bridges are only temporary structures, and that the strain to which the line was subjected by the passage of four heavily-laden trains, at an interval of only an hour between any two of them, was undoubtedly severe, may be deemed satisfactory. I have not yet received any fully authenticated details as to the actual condition of the Amman (Rabboth Ammon)–Ma'an section of the line, but I have little hesitation in stating that, for the reasons given above and one other, viz., that no stations have so far been built on that section, it cannot, strictly speaking, be said to have been completed. Nevertheless, the authorities responsible for the surveillance and general control of its construction, more especially the engineers, and the actual workmen employed, of whom a considerable proportion were soldiers, are to be congratulated most highly on the (even incomplete) achievement of what I may, perhaps, be allowed to call a "record" in railway construction. I am given to understand by competent persons, although I make the statement with a certain amount of reserve, because, owing to their absence from Damascus, I have been unable to consult any of the engineers actually employed on the line, that during the last fortnight or three weeks the rails were being laid at the rate of 2 kilom. per diem, while previously the work was

being carried out at an average daily speed of 1 kilom. If this be true, and knowing as I do that on the 9th July—the date of my last quarterly Report, to which I would beg your Excellency to refer—rails were still unlaid over a distance of 73 kilom., not to mention that even the earthworks were not completed, I am inclined to believe that it is, the feat may be considered as very remarkable.

Your Excellency will notice in the Report above referred to that I wrote of "the absurdity of entertaining the hope" of completing the Amman–Ma'an section of the line by the Sultan's Accession Day, and this was, in fact, the light in which the matter was viewed by all competent persons at the time. I hear that during the last few days the men were working night and day, and it would appear that the soldiers, who showed remarkable skill, deftness, and zeal, were more especially stimulated thereto by a promise that they would be released from this *corvée* after the 1st September, an engagement which, I am sorry to say, the military authorities have, it is said no intention of keeping.

The Mission, still accompanied by the Mushir Kyazim Pasha, proceeded to Ba'albec by a special train on the 4th instant, and thence continued their journey to Beyrout, on their way back to Constantinople. I hear, however, that they will go to Haifa first in order to inspect that branch of the Hedjaz line.

I might add that the numerous newspaper correspondents were authorized by the Sultan to report proceedings to their respective organs by telegraph, without any charge being made, a privilege of which they appear to have taken most ample advantage.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 188.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received September 26.*)

(No. 733.)
My Lord,

Therapia, September 20, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, written from Monsh, reporting that there is no change in the state of affairs in the plain, that the revolutionists are still absent, but that constant murders, of which a list is given, are committed without the perpetrators being brought to justice.

I have caused the condition of things as reported by Captain Tyrrell to be brought to the notice of the Grand Vizier, and I have impressed upon His Highness the necessity of taking proper precautions to protect the lives of the Armenian inhabitants of the plain, who are being daily called upon by the Turkish authorities to give up their weapons of defence.

The Grand Vizier at once caused a telegram to be addressed to the Vali of Bitlis, reminding him that the local authorities are responsible for the safety of the population disarmed by them. His Highness has subsequently caused me to be informed that the Vali has telegraphed that Teherkess Ali Bey, a captain of Seyaré gendarmes, whose conduct has been complained of by His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, has been suspended from his functions at Akhlat, and that the manner in which he is to be dealt with in addition will depend upon the finding of the court-martial convened at Sert to try him. The telegram further states that a man named Dervish, one of the Kurds accused of murdering seven Armenians at Koms, has been taken alive and handed over to the judicial authorities, while the other murderer, Mehmed Emin, is being actively pursued. These men are implicated in one of the murders reported in Captain Tyrrell's accompanying despatch.

The Vali of Bitlis further assures the Grand Vizier that Hadji Faris of Shemlagh, whose misdeeds have frequently been reported by Mr. Heathcote, is being diligently sought for. Mr. Heathcote states, however, in a despatch dated the 16th ultimo, that this man was still, at the time of writing, at Shemlagh or at his neighbouring pasturages, and that no effort had then been made to arrest him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 188.

Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 13.)
Sir,

Monsh, August 29, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that there has been no change in the conditions in Moush Plain during the past week. The revolutionists are still absent, and are apparently in the neighbourhood of Van. Though there is nothing particular going on here, it cannot be said that security, order, or good government reign; and the present state of affairs is accurately represented by the following list of isolated murders which have occurred this month, since the more serious affairs of Gravi, Sikavi, and Sheikh Yussuf which I have reported:—

Date.	Place.	Name.	Remarks.
August 8	At Meghdi	Beghdo Khoinshutian Gerbo .. Vartan Uronkli .. Boghios Broyan ..	Killed by a party of twenty-eight Kurds under Bakir Agha, of Ansur, Mehmed Ali, and Efo. The murderers are still at large.
„ 8	„ Baghlu		
„ 8	„ Homu ..	Egho Simonian ..	Murderer unknown.
„ 9	„ Koms	Garo Hachikian .. Melco Serjoyan .. Hagk Kazarian .. Sahag Pertoyan .. Haro Abirjian .. Zozan, wife of Ava ..	Killed by the Kurds, Mehmed Emin and Dervesh. Particulars reported in my despatch No. 8 of 13th August. Murderers still at large, though being sought.
„ 10	„ Shimlak ..	Matar Melkayan ..	Killed by a Kurd, Mehmet, with whom was associated one Yussuf. Reported in my despatch No. 8 of the 13th August. The murderers are still at large, though being sought.
„ 19	„ Kavaro ..	Khoushut Adzian ..	Killed by a Kurd, Haji Ahmo, and his two sons Husni and Ali. Murderers still at large.
„ 19	„ Chirish ..	Nado Hulghafian ..	Killed by Ibrahim Hassan Oghlu, who has been apprehended, and is in prison pending trial.
„ 19	On the Kurtik Road	Artin, of Semal ..	Killed by three Kurds of Larchikan as he was coming into Monsh. One of the supposed murderers has been apprehended, and is in prison pending investigation.
„ 21	At Hergert	Mattess Avegan Makar Gigoyan David Korkoyan	Killed by Jibranli Kurds, who also lifted the cattle of the village. The criminals are Hamidie, and so action against them must be taken through the military authorities at Erzinjan, who have been applied to.

In all, nine cases, eighteen victims, and only two men in prison in connection therewith.

I showed the above list to the Mutessarif, remarking that it disclosed a state of affairs which was not creditable, and which could easily be put an end to if the police, gendarmerie, and other officials did their duty, and if prompt and exemplary measures were taken with the murderers.

I also asked him how the people could be expected to believe what the Alai Bey promised on behalf of the Government, and to give up their arms at once, in the face of the facts expressed by this list.

When the Alai Bey visits an Armenian village to collect arms, he summons all the villagers and makes them a speech somewhat on the following lines: "You must give up all the arms which you have, and which you know you are not allowed to have. I don't want to hurt you, or to have to take your arms by force, but I must insist on your giving them up. I know you will say that you must have arms for your protection; but that argument does not hold. The Government is your protector, and I, as the Government's servant and the head of the gendarmerie, am responsible for your safety. Give up your arms and I promise to protect you in the name of the Government."

This is excellent in theory, but the people have lived all their lives under this theoretical protection, and I think they have some excuse for not taking the Aku Bey's words "au pied de la lettre." Hence the trouble which ensues over the collection of arms, as reported in my No. 8 of the 13th August.

The Mutessarif did not deny that things might well be better, but he said that my list only showed cases of Armenians murdered by Kurds, when there were probably just as many murders committed by Kurds among themselves, an argument which hardly improves the case of the apologist for the lawlessness and disorder of the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL.

No. 189.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received September 26.)

(No. 733.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September 20, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 658 of the 16th ultimo, forwarding copy of a report from Captain Tyrrell upon the commencement of the resettlement work in the districts which were the theatre of the recent Armenian disturbances, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a further report from Captain Tyrrell, stating that the work of resettlement is not proceeding smoothly in the districts of Talori and Khian, that the money for rebuilding the houses has not been paid, and that the construction of barracks is the only work being proceeded with.

Your Lordship will perceive that Captain Tyrrell gives it as his opinion that want of system is at the root of the whole failure of the resettlement scheme; that a competent official, preferably the Mutessarif of Mush, should have been put in charge of the execution of the project, and that a separate sum of money should have been set aside for the work.

On the 15th August the Vali of Bitlis telegraphed to the Grand Vizier that the reconstruction of the houses burned during the disturbances had been completed throughout the seven wards of Talori and the six villages of the Caza of Kulp, and that the necessary money for the rebuilding of their houses had been given in cash to the inhabitants of certain other villages outside these areas, the people having expressed a wish to undertake the reconstruction of their houses themselves.

I communicated the above report from the Vali to Captain Tyrrell, who answered by telegraph on the 12th instant that the Vali's statement was inaccurate, that no reconstruction had been done in the Talori district, and that of the sum given for resettlement purposes only 2,000*l.* out of 5,000*l.* had been paid.

I instructed Mr. Lamb to communicate the substance of Captain Tyrrell's reports to the Grand Vizier, and to urge the fulfilment of the promises made to me.

His Highness lost no time in sending a telegram to the Vali of Bitlis, calling upon him to explain the discrepancy between the statements contained in his telegram and the condition of affairs as reported by Captain Tyrrell, and instructing him to take steps to collect the necessary funds, or report the reasons that prevented his doing so. His Highness added that he would see that the money was forthcoming, and that he would place the resettlement work, throughout the whole of the districts affected, under the control of the Mutessarif of Mush.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 189.

Captain Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Mush, August 25, 1904.*

I REGRET to have to report that satisfactory progress does not seem to have been made in the work of resettlement in Talori and Khian.

In my despatch No. 1 of the 31st July I reported that I had seen the work in those districts commenced, with a specially appointed officer on the spot to superintend it, and that the Mutessarif of Mush had made a visit of inspection, to see

personally to the arrangements. At the same time I pointed out the difficulties of the task, and the possibility that Turkish administrative methods would not prove equal to carrying it through.

Lately I have received complaints from Armenian sources that the resettlement work in the above districts had come more or less to a standstill; that the money for rebuilding the houses had not been paid; and that the only work going on was the construction of barracks.

Knowing how little reliance can generally be placed on these complaints, I was not at first inclined to take them very seriously, but asked the Mutessarif of Mush if there was any truth in them, and how the resettlement was progressing.

He said that he had himself just learned that, since he and I were there the work had been practically at a standstill for want of money, and that he was very annoyed about things there, but that the matter is no longer in his hands, as there is now a Mutessarif in Genj, and Talori and Khian are in the Sanjak of Genj.

He admits that matters there have not gone as he intended. He took the trouble to go there (out of his sanjak) himself to get the whole work of resettlement into working order, there being at the time no Mutessarif in Genj; he got ill by so doing, and, after all, nothing seems to have been done. He says there was no obligation for him to do this; that Mutessarifs and other big officials are not expected to run about in the mountains and rough it in camp; that it was a thankless task; and that nothing would induce him to go there again without definite orders and money to carry on the work.

When the order for resettlement was received from Constantinople in June, he told the Vali that if he was to undertake the supervision of the resettlement, he must be temporarily relieved of the government of the Mush Sanjak. This had not been done, and his time was now fully occupied with the work of his own sanjak, including the resettlement of the villages which lie within it.

I confess that I sympathize with the Mutessarif in his point of view. He can not do his own work and some one else's at the same time, and he will probably get more kudos for collecting arms in the Armenian villages of Mush Plain than for the more difficult and disagreeable task of resettling Armenians in their former homes.

The Mutessarif had had one of his Kaimakams (Jevdet Bey, the Kaimakam of Melasgird) nominated Mutessarif Vekile of Genj, with the special idea of his superintending the resettlement of Talori and Khian, and had started him on his work there.

He now required Jevdet Bey back in his own caza, and as the new Mutessarif of Genj has arrived, he saw no further need for keeping Jevdet Bey in Talori. He therefore had him recalled, and urged that the Mutessarif of Genj should be sent up there without delay.

A day or two after this conversation I saw Jevdet Bey, on his way back to Melasgird through Mush. He confirmed what the Mutessarif had said. The Government could not rebuild the houses as promised until the barracks were built, and he had not been provided with enough money to pay the villagers the sums required to enable them to rebuild their houses themselves. Therefore no progress has been made in that part of the resettlement scheme. As the cause of this was the usual one, viz., want of ready money, I think it is very possible that the allowance in lieu of rations has also been allowed to fall into arrears, though Jevdet Bey would not admit this.

The root of the whole matter is want of system. The whole resettlement should have been put regularly under one head, preferably the Mutessarif of Mush, and a separate sum of money should have been allotted and set aside for this work.

As it is, the old Armenian district of Sasun has been ingeniously divided by the Turks between three sanjaks, and further sub-divided so as to cause the maximum amount of confusion and inconvenience. Thus certain villages of Talori (a very small and compact district) are not recognized as such by the Turks because they fall, on the one side in the Caza of Sasun, and on the other in that of Kulp, and the other sub-districts have been split up in the same senseless way.

Three cazas are comprised in the area over which the recent events were distributed. One official may feel himself responsible for the resettlement of a certain village, but will take no notice of the one next door to it, which may happen to be so remote from the centre of the caza to which it nominally belongs as to receive no notice at all. The Sasun Caza of the Mush Sanjak is less accessible to Mush than Talori is, while Talori is hopelessly out of reach of Genj, to which sanjak it belongs. Thus the only man who is concerned with the work of resettlement as a whole is the Vali of Bitlis;

and he probably knows less than any one about the country, and is the furthest away of all.

But there remains the still more important question of money, the want of which threatens to render nugatory the efforts which were made at the commencement. The initial step, that of collecting the refugees and returning them to their ruined villages, was successfully taken. The next steps were the more continuous efforts needed to rebuild the houses, and to feed the people and enable them to live until help was no longer needed. These efforts were begun, but have apparently not been continued.

The local administrations have got all they can do to find money for their own expenses. It is almost hopeless to expect them to provide that for the unusual expenditure necessitated by resettling the people as well.

The vilayet, too, would have probably found it difficult to put aside a sufficient sum, and I think this ought to have been arranged for by orders from the Porte when the orders for resettlement were given.

It is a very discouraging state of affairs, and it would almost seem that the Turkish Government cannot be trusted to carry on the resettlement without European supervision, or, at least, without Europeans to worry their officials.

I am now informed that the Mutessarif of Genj will not go to Talori and Khian, but that Rushdi Bey, the Acting Kaimakam of Kulp (in which caza both these nahies are), has been ordered to proceed there to continue the work of resettlement. He has also received orders to pay everything necessary out of the treasure-chest of his caza. This is useless. It is quite probable that there is no money in the said treasure-chest, and if there is any, the Kaimakam will not care about spending it on resettlement, as he has his own salaries and administration to think of, and doubtless knows from experience that the caza will suffer, and that no one will repay the money disbursed from its treasure-chest.

As regards the Sanjak of Mush, Gelli Guzan and the six villages of Shatlakh were, at the commencement, given half the money estimated as necessary for rebuilding them, with the promise that the other half would be given as soon as the money was expended.

The villagers of Shenik and Semal refused the money grant, preferring that the Government should undertake the rebuilding. This was to be done as soon as the barracks were built. As this work is taking longer than was expected, the people of these two villages are now asking for the money, saying they can wait no longer, and will do the rebuilding themselves.

The people of Gelli Missur and Gelli Geneman, who are to be settled in Shenik, are also entitled to money for building.

The Mutessarif admits all these claims, but says he simply has not the money to meet them. He has been expecting £T.1,000 from the Vilayet of Kharput for the last month, but apparently it is not to come. Now arrangements are being made with the Agricultural Bank, but it is doubtful if all the money required will be forthcoming.

It has been decided that the three villages of Talori, which fall administratively within the Susun Caza of the Mush Sanjak, are not entitled to money for rebuilding, as the Turks claim that they were destroyed by Ali Pasha four years ago, and do not come within the scope of the present resettlement. The inhabitants have, however, received rations.

It seems to me that the first and most essential step towards completing satisfactorily the work of resettlement is to have a sufficient sum of money put absolutely at the disposal of this work by order from Constantinople. And it must be remembered that, as there is not one man in charge of the whole resettlement, money will be required for Talori and Khian, as well as for the Sanjak of Mush.

Until this has been done, it is of very little use for a Consular officer to visit the resettled villages. He will simply see what ought to be done, and how much has been left undone, but all his representations will be met by the unanswerable "no money." And all the time he is out of touch with Constantinople and with the superior officials, and can do nothing to rectify matters until his return to Mush, where he will receive promises which, unless he is prepared to return to the mountains, may not be carried out. Winter is coming on, and time will be getting short for this sort of manœuvre.

But if the money be provided, as I have suggested it ought, then a final visit might be very useful, and, the Government having done its duty as to the barest

necessities of the people, the way would be cleared for any outside relief that may be contemplated.

The people of Gelli Missur and Gelli Geneman, mentioned above, have not even received the rations due to them, or money in lieu thereof, because, though they are now to be settled in the Mush Sanjak, the two villages which they have left are in the Kulp Caza of the Genj Sanjak. So it is argued that this expense should be borne by Kulp. But these villages are in touch with Mush, whereas Genj is for all practical purposes as far away as Constantinople, and does not apparently concern itself about them.

A representation concerning them has been made from Mush. It must first go to Genj, then to Passur, and then the money, if provided, must come back to Mush. So that it could hardly take longer if the villagers were in London instead of in Shenik. All this sort of thing would be obviated if one man were on the spot looking after the work with sufficient money in his hands.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain,*
His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

No. 190.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 341.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September 27, 1 04.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 716 of the 6th September relative to the recent disturbances at Van.

I approve your language to the Grand Vizier on the subject, as reported in your despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 191.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 3.)

(No. 747.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September 26, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 656 of the 16th ultimo, respecting the security of the roads in the Hedjaz, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Jeddah, reporting further recent robberies on the Jeddah–Mecca road, by which British Indian merchants appear to have been the greatest losers.

I am again calling the serious attention of the Sublime Porte to the renewed prevalence of insecurity, and urging them to adopt immediate and effective measures with a view to its suppression.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 191.

Acting Consul Hussein to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 77.)
Sir, *Jeddah, September 8, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that about a fortnight ago a small robbery took place on the Jeddah–Mecca road, and a British Indian merchant was the loser.

Five days ago a very big robbery was committed midway between here and Mecca, in which 600 camels loaded with merchandize have been carried away, and though details are not yet in hand, I am afraid the British Indian merchants are the greatest losers in this robbery also.

The raiders, who belonged to the Bishr and Moabbad divisions of the Harb tribe, were about 700 in number, and were well armed.

The escort of the caravan, which consisted of about fifty soldiers, was overpowered, four of whom were severely wounded, and as the raiders had divided themselves in three parties, the soldiers, being in danger of being surrounded, and coming under cross fire, retreated, and went back to the guard-house, which was about 2 miles from the place of the raid.

It is reported that four of the raiders were killed and about ten were wounded.

No steps have been taken by the authorities to recover the robbed property nor to punish the robbers.

If things are allowed to go on in this manner, I am afraid the Jeddah–Meeca road will be in a much more dangerous condition than last year, and as the pilgrim season is beginning, most respectfully I beg to request that representations may be made at the Porte to take the necessary steps to secure the safety of the roads, as the present state of insecurity endangers the life and property of many thousands of British subjects trading in the country or coming for pilgrimage.

I beg to inclose a cutting[a] from the "Egyptian Gazette" of the 27th August for your Excellency's perusal, but I do not know whether the news has any truth in it, as no signs of any change are perceptible from the surroundings and behaviour of his Excellency the Vali, who has not gone to Taif this year, and is still staying at Jeddah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MOHAMMED HUSSEIN.

No. 192.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 3.)

(No. 751.)
My Lord, *Therapia, September 27, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 734 of the 20th instant, respecting resettlement work in the recently disturbed districts of Armenia, I have the honour to report that I have again spoken on this subject to the Grand Vizier. His Highness seemed most anxious to give effect to my representations with regard to the efficient execution of the methods for alleviating the distress of the Armenians in consequence of the recent events, and he stated that he had appointed a small Mixed Commission on which the Mutessarif of Moush, who is highly spoken of by the Consuls, had a seat, and who would preside over the work of reconstructing the destroyed houses and of repatriating the refugees and generally of supervising the proper application of the funds allocated for that purpose.

His Highness professed to welcome my statement that Captain Tyrrell would return shortly to Moush, in order to report on the progress made in the measures of relief.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 193.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 352.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October 5, 1904.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 733 of the 20th ultimo relative to the situation in the Moush plain of Armenia.

I approve your Excellency's representations to the Grand Vizier as to the necessity of taking proper precautions to protect the lives of the Armenian inhabitants of the plain.

I am, &c
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

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[a] Not sent.

No. 194.

Miss Cantlow to Foreign Office.—(Received October 7.)

Dear Sir, *47, Victoria Street, Westminster, October 5, 1904.*

THE Committee of the "Friends of Armenia" would be deeply grateful if you could send them any information concerning the state of Van, where they have several protégés.

They would also be glad to receive the latest news from Moush and Sassoun, and to know whether the present state of the country makes it possible for anything to be done on behalf of the children left orphans by this year's massacres.

Thanking you for your kindness in supplying information in the past, and hoping you will again relieve our anxiety, believe me, &c.

(Signed) E. CANTLOW, *Secretary.*

No. 195.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 354.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October 8, 1904.*

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copy of a letter which has been received from the Secretary of the Society of the "Friends of Armenia,"[a] and I have to request you to inform me what answer should, in your opinion, be returned to the inquiry as to whether the present state of the districts of Moush and Sassoun make it possible for anything to be done on behalf of the children left orphans by this year's disturbances.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 196.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 772.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October 4, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 716 of the 6th ultimo, containing the Turkish official version of what occurred at Van on the 31st August last, I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of an interesting report that I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul which explains in detail the events that led up to the incident, as also what actually took place.

It would appear from Captain Tyrrell's despatch that he is satisfied that the Turkish authorities did all that was in their power to check the soldiers who were, for a short time, out of hand, and the immediate transfer of the battalion actually implicated to the barracks below the city undoubtedly contributed to the preservation of order. In bringing Captain Tyrrell's account of the affair to the notice of the Grand Vizier, I shall impress upon his Highness that he must not relax his energetic measures to keep the local authorities in Armenia awake to the importance of preserving the public peace.

I am telling Captain Tyrrell, in reply to the inquiries contained in the last three paragraphs of his despatch, that it is desirable that the custom as to the flying of foreign flags prevalent in Turkey should be followed as far as is possible in Van.

As regards the question of sheltering Armenians, it seems to me obvious that Captain Tyrrell cannot act otherwise than he proposes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

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[a] No. 194.

Inclosure in No. 196.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor

(No. 40.)

Van, September 10, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of the 8th instant, announcing my arrival in Van on Tuesday the 6th.

It appears that there had been unrest among the Mussulman inhabitants for some time, owing to the continual reports of the arrival of revolutionists. These had been coming here from Mush Plain, as well as from the Persian frontier; and Antranik's band, which had been engaged in the affair of Shemiram, on the Nimrud Dagh, had eventually embarked on the lake and established themselves on the Island of Akhtamar, where they hoisted their revolutionary standards. This occurred about the 23rd August. The Turks were quite helpless, not daring to venture out in boats.

Soldiers lined the lake shore, opposite the island, and mountain guns were brought out from Van. These were of the old pattern, and the range was found to be too long for them, while the bullets of the revolutionists carried the distance. The Ferik then elaborated a scheme of putting the guns in boats, to be used as platforms at a shorter range, and from these platforms he hoped to sink the boats which had brought the band to the island. The revolutionists, however, did not wait for this, and disappeared.

About this time, some representatives of the leading Turkish families of Van, who are also local officials, came to the Vali and suggested that he should issue arms to the Turks, to enable them to defend themselves. The Vali replied, very properly, by dismissing these men from their offices.

There is always a strong faction here against the Vali, which represents him as unduly favouring Christians, and his action on this occasion increased the animus of this faction against him. It is said that these Turks secretly made preparations for a massacre, had invited Kurds into the city, and given notice to others to hold themselves in readiness outside to come in and attack the Armenians at a moment's notice.

In the early morning of Wednesday, the 31st August, a soldier was killed in a street of the quarter in which is situated the British Consulate. Turkish officers tell me that he was one of a patrol which saw some men coming towards them, and challenged. The reply was a volley, which killed this soldier, and after which the aggressors fled. Others say that the corpse was that of a man who had died in hospital, and had been deposited here by arrangement of the above-mentioned Turks, and that a couple of bullets had been fired into the body to give verisimilitude to the tale of his having been killed by revolutionists. I believe that my French colleague inclines to this version of the affair, but I confess it seems to me rather far-fetched; and if doubt had been expressed at the time, it could have been proved easily enough by asking the American doctor here to examine the body. In the absence of any proof whatever, I think one may reject this story.

At any rate, it was said that the house in front of which the soldier was killed was responsible, and had been harbouring "fedais." The Vali gave orders for this house to be burned. It is the usual practice to burn any house which has been known to shelter revolutionists, or the inhabitants of which have helped them. In this case there seems to have been no evidence against the house, and the order was a mistake. But the Vali was probably forced to do something to satisfy the soldiers and other Moslems. On the protestations of the French Consul the order was rescinded, and the flames were extinguished. In the meantime, I understand, one of the inmates had been killed by the soldiers.

About 10:30 A.M., while there was still a crowd of soldiers and others in front of this house, shots were heard, cries of "fedai" were raised, and all the Armenians who were not already hidden began to jump over walls, run away, and seek refuge where they could, while the soldiers pursued anybody they saw, shooting, clubbing, and stabbing promiscuously. This lasted about three-quarters of an hour. The Vali and Ferik arrived, and comparative order was restored, but not before many regrettable incidents had occurred.

The wonder is that during this day only six Armenians were killed (one of whom was a woman). There were several wounded. Small disturbances took place in other parts of the city and gardens, there being a few isolated cases of Armenians being stabbed by Turks.

The authorities seem to have done all they could to suppress the disturbance. The battalion to which the soldiers belonged was at once transferred to the barracks below the city, and its place in the gardens was taken by the battalion commanded by the son of

the Ferik. Several soldiers and other Turks were imprisoned. The bazaar did not suffer at all, and seems to have owed its immunity to the energy of Mir Alai Mehmed Bey.

Since that day the authorities have continued to search for and imprison people who then misbehaved themselves. But the difficulty is, that the Armenians who were beaten, stabbed, or robbed will be afraid to give evidence. Some have come and complained to me, have given me the names of their aggressors, and expect me to get them punished; but when asked if they will lay a plaint or bear witness, they invariably refuse. The Vali is ready to apprehend and try any one so accused, but I fear few convictions and punishments can be obtained.

Three soldiers were half-killing an Armenian in front of my house, and my servant, who happened to be the only man in the house at the time, rescued him and brought him inside the doorway. In so doing he narrowly escaped with his own life, the soldiers threatening him with their bayonets, accusing him of being a fedai, and denying his right to open my premises to fugitives. These three soldiers were identified, and are now in prison. The man who was thus rescued died on his way to the hospital.

The Americans here, and others, say that certain officers incited and encouraged the men, and spoke disrespectfully of the foreign Representatives, warning people that no Consulate would be allowed to shelter Armenians.

The Turks deny this, and say it was simply the same old story—that the soldiers, maddened by the murder of a comrade, refused to listen to orders or to be restrained, threatened to shoot their officers, and were completely out of control.

The fact that the troops (certain junior officers, as well as men) cannot be relied on strikes me as the gravest feature of the situation. With the best intentions on the part of the authorities, there can be no real security in this state of things.

Meanwhile, thousands of Armenians had abandoned their houses, and bringing, in many cases, their household effects, had taken refuge in the various foreign premises. The American Mission sheltered large numbers, as also the Dominican Mission, and the French and Persian Consulates; while in the block of three houses, of which the British Consulate is the centre, some 1,500 people were collected.

This continued all Thursday and Friday, while the apprehension increased. The soldiers were fortifying street corners, loop-holing walls, &c., while the revolutionists, well hidden, were holding themselves in readiness to take a hand the moment anything began. It was reported that a telegram had been received from Constantinople: "Exterminate the fedais." The Turks, who wanted trouble, said that this meant all the Armenians, as every Armenian was, at any rate, in sympathy with the fedais. It was reported that Kurds were collecting, and had even been secretly introduced into Van, and that the Vali was giving way to the pressure being put upon him. If there is any truth in the story of this telegram, it cannot be denied that the Vali's position was a very difficult one, for his enemies and those who were urging him to permit a massacre (under the more euphonious name of "search of the Armenian quarters"), could always represent him as disobeying orders and sheltering the revolutionists.

Altogether, affairs looked very grave on Friday, when the Vali sent for Dr. Ussher, of the American Mission, and asked him if he could get into touch with the revolutionists and persuade them to leave Van. This was finally accomplished after some negotiation, the Government agreeing to let the revolutionists slip away by night undisturbed, and undertaking to withdraw the troops from the Armenian quarters which they had been patrolling.

On Saturday, the 3rd, the tension was over, and things began to settle down and take their normal course.

All the "foreign" revolutionists are now believed to have left Van, only their leader, a man know as the "Doctor," remaining. The presence of this man is supposed to make for peace. It was he who negotiated with the Vali through Dr. Ussher, and who prevented the revolutionists from taking part in the disturbances of the 31st.

Now, as reported in my telegram, things are quiet, and, according to the Government and the local paper, the traditional "asayish-i-berkemal" prevails. But it is rather a factitious tranquillity. The Vali and other officials point with pride to the fact that the bazaar is open, and that work is going on as usual, but they do not say that this is merely because orders have been issued that any man who closes his shop will be imprisoned and fined.

In fact, the Armenians, in spite of their terror, are forced to go and open their shops, and make a pretence of carrying on their trades. This is probably not a bad thing, as the Armenians are certainly inclined to shut their shops and give way to panic without sufficient reason. But, though one can force the shops to be opened, one cannot force

people to buy and sell, and there is practically no trade being done in spite of the open shops.

Some of the foreign residents complain that certain more or less highly-placed Turks spoke insultingly of Europeans and foreigners, and disrespectfully of the flags of foreign Powers. And there does seem to have been some ill-feeling and misunderstanding on this point. I think the promiscuous hoisting of foreign flags without sufficient cause is naturally calculated to annoy the Turks. And I should like to be informed whether flags of Powers which are not represented here should, in any circumstances, be flown, as the subjects of such Powers in Van depend generally upon me.

The American flag was flown over the mission premises, on the grounds that Dr. Norton, the American Consul at Kharput, was here at the time. However, the Turks say that Dr. Norton has no status in this vilayet. They took no official action, but have complained to me privately about this.

Certainly, if I had been here, I should not have allowed the Americans to hoist their flag, but should have given them one of mine to fly when it became a question of the safety of their premises or of the people who were taking refuge there.

There is another point on which I should like to be informed: To what extent are European institutions justified in receiving and protecting Armenians in cases such as the one described in this despatch? When it is a question of a massacre, it is impossible to do otherwise than receive and protect all one can. At the same time, this is probably exceeding one's legal rights, and might lead to a violation of foreign premises, which would be a cause of trouble that it would be well to avoid if possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. L. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

No. 197.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 10.)

(No. 774.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October* 4, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 687 of the 27th August last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Dickson, His Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, on the subject of the Russian monastery in Palestine, inclosing extract from a further Memorandum on this subject and stating that the French Consul only has reported on it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 197.

Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 57.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, September* 13, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Allan Young's despatch of the 27th ultimo, stating that your Excellency would wish to know whether my French and Italian colleagues are aware of the founding of a Russian monastery in Palestine, reported in my despatch No. 44 of the 29th July, and whether they have acquainted their respective Embassies with the fact.

In reply, I beg to state that I have sounded both my colleagues above mentioned on the subject, and they have informed me that they were fully aware of the creation of the monastery in question. My French colleague, M. Boppe, gave me to understand that he had already reported the case to his Embassy, by way of information, but the Italian Consul-General, M. Carletti, said he had not yet sent in any report about the matter.

I have the honour to inclose herewith an extract from a further Memorandum on the establishment of this monastery, which has been furnished to me by the Greek Patriarchate, containing a somewhat interesting parallel between the policy of

Russia regarding Mount Athos and the Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople, and that which she has initiated in connection with the founding of the monastery in question and the Jerusalem Patriarchate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 197.

Extract from a Memorandum drawn up by the Greek Patriarchate.

LE but direct de l'achat de ces ruines par ces trois religieux, dont les deux autres s'appellent Pantéléïmon et Arsenios, est de faire restaurer l'ancienne lauré, et d'y faire installer un grand nombre de religieux Russes. Voilà pour le but direct. Le but lointain de la politique qui protège de telles démarches est de renverser le *statu quo* ecclésiastique existant en Palestine. Si le but direct était atteint, le but lointain n'en serait qu'une conséquence nécessaire et inévitable. En voici les raisons:

En Palestine il est impossible qu'il y ait un couvent Orthodoxe, n'importe à quelle nationalité qu'il appartienne, indépendant du Patriarcat Orthodoxe; cela est expressément défendu par les canons de l'Église. Donc, le Couvent d'Ain-Fara étant, nécessairement, considéré comme un des couvents du Patriarcat, les religieux qui y résideront seront considérés comme religieux du Patriarcat Grec; ils auront, par conséquent, les mêmes droits que les religieux actuels du Patriarcat, y compris le droit d'élire, et de se faire élire. Le nombre des religieux Grecs ne pouvant être augmenté à cause de leur pauvreté et de leur faiblesse, il restera toujours le même, tandis que celui des Russes pourrait être augmenté, à cause de leur richesse et de leur puissante protection politique, à l'infini, et en peu de temps, il s'ensuit nécessairement que le Patriarcat de Jérusalem, avec tous ses droits, se trouverait bientôt aux mains des religieux Russes, qui sont simultanément sujets de Sa Majesté le Sultan et de Sa Majesté le Tsar.

C'est le même plan élaboré et appliqué au Mont Athos. On commença par permettre l'entrée au Couvent de Saint-Pantéléïmon de cinq religieux Russes qui n'étaient pas alors censés dangereux, vu le nombre des religieux de ce couvent et des autres couvents en général. Mais en un clin d'œil les Russes y étaient déjà au nombre de 100, sous peu au nombre de 1,000. Le couvent était converti en un couvent entièrement Russe en presque quinze années, depuis la première faute; le nombre des religieux qui s'y trouvaient étaient plus de 3,000. Leur qualité et leurs desseins sont mieux connus des personnes qui sont en meilleur état que nous de savoir tout ce qui s'y passe. Entre le Mont Athos, cependant, et Jérusalem il y a une différence considérable. Le Mont Athos n'est qu'une congrégation de religieux ayant une administration séparée, indépendante par conséquent du Patriarcat de Constantinople; en sorte que quand même le Mont Athos, entièrement, se convertirait en un couvent immense Russe, le *statu quo* administratif du Patriarcat resterait tel qu'il est aujourd'hui. A Jérusalem, au contraire, ce sont les moines qui constituent le Patriarcat; si un changement quelconque survenait, le caractère même du Patriarcat aurait été en même temps changé.

A l'heure qu'il est il y a à Jérusalem quelques religieux Russes faisant partie de la Mission dite Russe. Ceux-ci résident dans cette ville en vertu des conditions fixées d'avance et des canons d'Église; ils ne sont pas donc dangereux au Patriarcat, car, en leur qualité de religieux de l'Église Russe n'ont nullement le droit de s'ingérer dans les affaires du Patriarcat. Les Russes pouvaient facilement convertir les ruines d'Ain-Fara en une propriété de la Mission; alors le Patriarcat ne pouvait que protester simplement contre Ali Silia, qui aurait vendu une propriété étrangère. La politique Russe, cela va sans dire, n'aurait rien gagné à cet achat, car elle ne ferait rien autre qu'augmenter seulement d'une parcelle de terrain la propriété de la Mission en Palestine, la Mission n'ayant nullement le droit de faire bâtir des couvents sur un sol ecclésiastique étranger. Ce que cherche la politique Russe n'est pas l'augmentation en quantité des biens Russes en Palestine; ce serait l'obtention des droits qui mèneraient tout droit au but final, savoir, la conquête du Patriarcat de Jérusalem, conformément au plan élaboré il y a longtemps.

Ce plan de la politique Russe en égard aux Églises Orthodoxes d'Orient, lequel était connu jusqu'à présent par des agissements partiels de ses représentants, a été

connu, dans son texte, il y a quatre ans par la publication par mégarde de tout ce qui concerne Cyrille Nahimow, évêque de Méletopolis, premier supérieur de la Mission ecclésiastique Russe à Jérusalem (1858–1863). Cette publication a été faite d'abord dans la "Revue de l'Académie de Kiew," puis dans un traité à part. Dans ce plan nous lisons, entre autres, qu'il faut enlever aux Grecs les Patriarcats d'Alexandrie, d'Antioche, et de Jérusalem, au moins les deux derniers. Quant au Patriarcat de Constantinople, il faut le laisser aux mains des Grecs pour l'Orthodoxie en Russie, à cause de sa grande autorité et de son passé historique. Mais, en même temps, il faudra que la Russie l'affaiblisse en travaillant en faveur de l'indépendance des Bulgares; il faudra qu'elle le fasse dépendre, sous le point de vue financier, de la Russie. Pour que la Russie pût enlever aux mains des Grecs les autres Patriarcats, il fallait débuter par le Patriarcat d'Antioche, car le peuple de la Syrie est déjà prévenu.

Voici donc le plan élaboré il y a longtemps. Le Patriarcat de Constantinople est déjà affaibli par le schisme Bulgare; on s'est emparé du Patriarcat d'Antioche en faisant monter sur le trône un Patriarche indigène. D'après le programme susmentionné, à présent c'est le tour du Patriarcat de Jérusalem. Le clergé du Patriarcat de Jérusalem étant entièrement composé de Grecs, il paraît impossible qu'on occupe le trône patriarcal par d'autres moyens; on a jugé donc nécessaire de mettre à exécution le plan déjà tenté au Mont Athos, qui a eu de si bons résultats.

Il résulte de tout ce qui précède que le Patriarcat Grec ne pouvait considérer cette démarche des moines du Mont Athos que comme une question de vie et de mort; il protesta donc auprès du Gouvernement Ottoman, et auprès du Consulat-Général de Russie, demandant l'expulsion de ces moines de Palestine, l'annulation de l'achat fait illégalement, et la restitution des ruines en question au Patriarcat auquel elles appartiennent de droit.

La protestation du Patriarcat, et sa prétention de faire éloigner ces moines, sont fondées sur des raisons juridiques. Conformément au principe en vigueur dans l'Église Orthodoxe, il est défendu rigoureusement qu'un religieux séjourne dans les limites de la juridiction d'une autre église, sans autorisation de l'évêque dont il relève, ni permis de séjour de l'évêque de la localité où il doit séjourner. Il n'est nullement permis, n'importe pour quel motif que ce soit, la fondation d'un couvent, d'une habitation quelconque, d'une église, d'un oratoire, sans permis de l'évêque de la localité.

En voici le texte de quelques-unes de ces lois fondamentales: "Tous ceux qui, témérairement et sans crainte de Dieu ni égards pour la loi d'église, quitteraient leur église, prêtres, diacres, ou clériceaux, ne sauraient être reçus dans une autre église; il faut, à tout prix, qu'ils retournent à leur paroisse" (A. Concile Œcuménique, canon 16). "Comme quelques-uns portant l'habit monacal troublent les affaires d'église et d'État, parcourant indistinctement les villes et s'étudiant à fonder des couvents, il a été décidé que personne ne pourrait fonder ni instituer un couvent, ou un oratoire, nulle part sans l'agrément de l'évêque de la ville" (D. Concile Œcuménique, canon 4). "Il n'est pas permis que des clériceaux relevant d'une église soient admis à une autre église. . . . Si un évêque, malgré cette clause, reçoit un clérical qui relève d'un autre évêque, il a été décidé qu'il sera excommunié; il en sera de même de celui qui a été reçu" (D. Concile Œcuménique, canon 20).

Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, voulant confirmer ces lois de l'Église par son hérat conféré au Patriarche, ordonne en général que "les dispositions religieuses qui concernent les clercieux et autres Grecs, émanées du Patriarche, soient valides et exécutables;" il ordonne particulièrement que "les religieux qui n'appartiendraient pas à un couvent, et qui se déplaceraient d'une localité à l'autre, menant une vie déréglée, soient renvoyés par le Patriarche."

Dans l'accomplissement de ce devoir, dans le cas présent, aucun Agent Russe n'a le droit d'intervenir, dans le cas même où il voudrait se retrancher derrière la nationalité Russe, qui n'existe pas. Une intervention active du Consulat de Russie déclarerait les religieux en question sujets Russes, par conséquent religieux de l'église Russe; dans ce cas une protestation serait faite auprès du Synode de l'Église de Russie, lequel ne peut, quand même il le voudrait, méconnaître l'autorité des canons de l'Église; il ordonnerait à l'instant à ses clériceaux de quitter la Palestine. Mais précisément cela ne convient pas à la politique qui les protège; voilà donc pourquoi le Consulat tâche, en cherchant, d'établir qu'il ne s'agit pas de moines; il s'agirait tout simplement d'un sujet Russe, nommé Dimitri Popow. La dénaturation des faits n'est pas moins évidente; elle pourrait être démontrée par une visite sur place d'une Commission d'Enquête qui aurait pu vérifier la présence, d'un côté de neuf moines

pour le moment, et de l'autre elle verrait que les constructions accusent manifestement la fondation d'un couvent.

L'emprunt de 400,000 roubles donné à la congrégation du Saint-Sépulcre par le Gouvernement de Russie, en vue de faire restaurer le couvent de la susdite congrégation à Moscow, n'a eu aucune influence sur la fermeté de la protestation du Patriarcat, ainsi que la probabilité de saisie des revenus des immeubles situés en Russie du Saint-Sépulcre, qui constituent la plus grande partie des revenus totaux du Patriarcat. Telle est l'importance qu'attribue le Patriarcat à cette question.

No. 198.

Foreign Office to Miss Cantlow.

Madam, *Foreign Office, October* 10, 1901.

I LAID before the Marquess of Lansdowne your letter of the 5th instant asking for information with regard to the state of affairs in the districts of Van and Moush, and I am directed by his Lordship to state that at the beginning of last month reports reached His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to the effect that disturbances had occurred in the former place. Sir Nicholas O'Conor at once called the attention of the Grand Vizier to the rumour, and, in reply to his Excellency's representations, his Highness assured him that stringent orders had been sent to the local authorities to put down the movement with the least possible loss of life, and they had been warned to take special care to prevent the participation of the Kurds in any military measures which might be necessary.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, who had been temporarily employed at Moush, was instructed by the Ambassador to return at once to his post.

The latest reports received from Moush and Sassoun tended to show that the work of resettlement was not proceeding as satisfactorily as could be desired; but, in consequence of urgent representations made by Sir Nicholas O'Conor, the Grand Vizier telegraphed to the Vali to take steps at once to collect the necessary funds, and he further promised to place the work under the Mutessarif of Moush, who is a competent official.

Your inquiry as to whether the present state of the country makes it possible for anything to be done on behalf of the children left orphans by this year's disturbances has been referred to Sir Nicholas O'Conor.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ELDON GORST.

No. 199.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 361.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 11, 1901.

I HAVE received Sir N. O'Conor's despatch No. 772 of the 4th instant, transmitting a Report from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the subject of the disturbances in that town on the 31st August and the following days.

I approve his Excellency's proposal to impress upon the Grand Vizier the importance of preserving the public peace in Armenia, as well as his instructions to Captain Tyrrell as to the desirability of following, as far as possible, in Van the custom as to the flying of foreign flags prevalent in Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 200.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 17.)

(No. 788.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October* 10, 1904.

WITH reference to Sir Nicholas O'Conor's despatch No. 734 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van respecting the work of resettlement of the Sasun refugees, and transmitting a statement of the money given to the villages of Talori and Kulp.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 200.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 41.)

Sir, *Van, September* 12, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of to-day's date. In my No. 12 of the 25th ultimo I reported that the resettlement work had not progressed as it ought to have done, and that it had practically come to a standstill for want of money. I also said that this money ought to be arranged for from Constantinople, there being none available locally.

As a matter of fact, when the order for the resettlement of the Sasun refugees was given, a sum of 500,000 piastres was dedicated to this work. This sum was to have been received from other vilayets, but only 200,000 piastres had been received so far, and the Mutessarif did not seem hopeful of getting any more just then.

In regard to Mr. Lamb's Memorandum No. 281 of the 16th ultimo, it surprised me a good deal to learn that the Vali of Bitlis had telegraphed to the Grand Vizier, as he did on the 15th ultimo. That was the day he left Mush for Bitlis, as I then reported. He is a man who has apparently had little, if any, experience before coming to Bitlis, other than that which is to be gained in the Mutessarifik of Pera, and he is not fit, in my opinion, for the duties of a Vali in Kurdistan. He does not seem to understand how untrustworthy most of the minor officials are, and he has a tendency to take a report from one of these as the final word on any question. This being so, he may have believed at the time the statements which he telegraphed to the Grand Vizier. Still, as I saw him continually up to the day on which he sent this telegram, I think that, if he had had news to this effect and believed it, he would not have failed to mention it to me. It is, I am afraid, more probable that he simply wired what he did for his own glorification, as he was leaving Mush. The Grand Vizier is far away, and has probably no means of checking such a statement. I was near at hand, and the Vali knew that I would not receive such a statement without verifying it. In any case, since that date, the Vali's actions show that he does not now himself believe what he wired on the 15th ultimo. I had written privately to Mr. Heathcote, asking him to ask the Vali to find money from the funds of the vilayet for the continuation of the resettlement work. I understand, from Mr. Heathcote's reply to me, that the Vali said he was giving orders in this sense, but he never said that the work was completed, and that there was no further need of money.

The "certain other villages outside these areas" (see Memorandum No. 281) are mostly those of the Sandjak of Mush.

As explained in my No. 12, the villages of Shenik and Semal had not, up to the date of my leaving Mush, received any cash towards rebuilding, and the other villages had only received half the sums estimated as necessary for this work in each case.

The Vali's telegram was dated the 15th ultimo. It was on the 20th that I had the conversation with Jevdet Bey, up till then Special Settlement Officer for Talori and the Kulp villages, reported in my No. 12. Jevdet Bey's report of the situation is far more likely to be correct than the Vali's, and is diametrically opposed to it.

Finally I inclose a statement prepared for me by the Mutessarif of Mush on the 29th ultimo, with a translation. The first table of this statement shows the money given to the villagers of Talori and Kulp for subsistence, the number of people present to date in each village, and the date to which the subsistence money was reckoned. It will be seen that in Talori this was mostly to about the end of July. In the case of

the Kulp villages, there only appears the vague statement "to various dates," and I believe that nothing had been given since I was there, when they received their allowance up to the end of July.

The second table shows the money paid for reconstruction of houses, and only the Kulp villages appear. There is no pretence that this money has been paid to the villages of Talori, and even that it has been paid to the Kulp villages does not necessarily mean that the houses are yet rebuilt. Until the barracks are finished the villagers will probably find it difficult to bring in wood, all available transport being used by the Government for the construction of the barracks. I think these tables may be relied on; they are, at all events, not likely to understate the case for the Government, and they show that my report of the situation is nearer the mark than the Vali's. It is as proof of the unreliability of the Vali's telegram that I inclose them, but I hope they may not be used so as to get the Mutessarif into trouble for having supplied me with material whereby to refute the statements of the Vali.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 200.

(Translation.)

Tables given by Mutessarif of Mush on August 29, 1904.

Table 1.—GIVES for the food of the Refugees.

Names of Villages.		Piastres.	Number of People.	Date to which provided for.	Remarks.
Talori	Tovalink	613·30	67	July 12, 320 ..	All these dates are of the Turkish style.
	Hartik	1,197·25	125	„ 12, „ ..	
	Hekki*	1,155·35	156	„ 12, „ ..	
	Heleghink	828·30	150	„ 13, „ ..	
	Pourkh	291·20	61	„ 13, „ ..	
	Hakmank	266·30	52	„ 12, „ ..	
	Holovit	339·25	65	„ 12, „ ..	
	Hosver	45·15	11	„ 29, „ ..	
	Havgank	158·35	34	„ 15, „ ..	
Kulp	Hezret	891·00	109	Provided for from May 3, 320, to various dates	
	Hartkhot	503·10	61		
	Akchi Ser	2,236·23	264		
	Ardgank	1,707·00	201		
	Helin	581·25	84		
	Guzank	952·35	141		
	Sevit	301·05	30		
Total		12,371·13	1,617		

* The central village of Talori.

† These two villages are really Talori, but not so reckoned by the Turks.

Table 2.—PAID for Burned Houses (Kulp villages only).

	Piastres.
Hezre	4,104
Hartkho	2,725
Akchi Ser	6,080
Guzank	1,715½
Ardgank	4,550
Helin	1,770
Sevit	1,965
Inkan (a small Kurdish hamlet)	225
Total	23,134½

(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

September 12, 1904.

No. 201.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 17.)

(No. 700.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October 11, 1904.*

WITH reference to Sir N. O'Conor's despatch No. 750 of the 27th September respecting the appointment of a new Vali of Bussorah, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul in that town, reporting on the dismissal of the late Vali and on the disturbed state in which he had left the district.

Syed Talib Bey, to whose intrigues Mr. Monahan alludes, and the rejection of whose candidature for the vacant post was reported in the above-mentioned despatch to your Lordship, has now fallen entirely into disfavour, the Grand Vizier having succeeded in convincing the Sultan that all the troubles which have of late arisen in the Province of Bussorah can be attributed to his machinations. The new Vali has instructions to arrest and deport to Constantinople both the father and the elder brother of Talib Bey.

With regard to Moukhis Pasha, the new Vali, reports having appeared in the European press that he was removed from Salonica at the instance of the British Embassy, and he himself being under the same erroneous impression, I have taken steps, in order to avoid any prejudice to his relations with the Consulate, to make it clear that the Embassy neither insisted on his removal from his last post nor objected to his appointment to Bussorah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 201.

Consul Monahan to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 38.)
Sir, *Bussorah, September 14, 1904.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 52 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to report that on the 9th instant a telegram was received here from Constantinople informing Mustapha Nouri Pasha that his services, both as Vali and Military Commandant, had ceased. He is to remain acting only until the arrival of Fikhri Pasha, who is expected here from Bagdad in a day or two, and who will become Acting Vali pending the appointment of a new Vali. Fikhri Pasha is, I hear, a Colonel aged about 40, who has had some European education. It is rumoured that Mustapha Nouri Pasha will be appointed to the command of troops in Macedonia in place of Ibrahim Pasha.

The probable immediate reason of his sudden dismissal has been the renewed outbreak within the last fortnight of serious disturbances at Amara, where he was supposed to have made peace (see my despatch No. 38 of the 11th ultimo). The impression here is that Syed Talib Pasha, ex-Mutessarif of Nejd, now in Constantinople, is working hard to obtain the post for himself, and he may have been describing the state of Bussorah as unsatisfactory and dangerous, which, in fact, it is. In the town and in the immediate neighbourhood of Bussorah there have been about fifteen murders this year, all of them unpunished. At least five of these were committed this summer in broad daylight, including the audacious murder of the Mussulman notable, Hajji Munsoor, member of the Administrative Council, who was shot dead while sitting in a café by two men commonly asserted to have been employed for this purpose by the Nakib, the father of the same Syed Talib Pasha.

The Nakib was undoubtedly the enemy of Hajji Munsoor, whom he regarded as a rival in influence over the people and the local Government. It is a strange circumstance that telegrams have been received from Mahmud-el-Nima, who is a kinsman of Syed Talib, and is now with him in Constantinople, demanding 1,500 liras alleged to have been deposited with the deceased Hajji Munsoor in the presence of witnesses, but without documents passing. The family of Hajji Munsoor declare that it is all a fiction. There have been this summer six great burglaries by bands of twenty men or upwards, and three fires, rare occurrences in the town of Bussorah, in one of which the whole of a principal bazaar and in another the Imperial Ottoman Bank was destroyed. The unpaid soldiers plunder freely on the occasions of these fires. It is difficult to say how far the ex-Vali is responsible for this state of things, but it is

certain he has gained the reputation of a venal, stupid, and obstinate Governor. I have fully reported to your Excellency, in recent telegrams, his obstinate and stupid conduct in regard to the question of a site for the new quarantine station, in which matter there seems to be no doubt that his foster brother, Hajji Nejim Bey, who has been his instrument in many questionable transactions, has a direct pecuniary interest, through the Jew proprietors having offered a reward if they can be saved from expropriation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 202.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 17.)

(No. 701. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October 11, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith, copy of a despatch from the Military Attaché to the Embassy, containing some notes of a conversation which he held recently with the Minister of War.

His Excellency's allusion to a project of the Ottoman Government to build a line with military labour from Angora to Sivas and Erzeroum after the completion of the Hedjaz Railway is interesting.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 202.

Lieutenant-Colonel Maunsell to Mr. Townley.

(No. 63.)
Sir, *Therapia, October 10, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report the following information obtained yesterday from the Minister of War which may be of interest.

As regards the fighting in Central Arabia, I asked if the relief expedition under Aarif Pasha had reached its destination, but I was informed that it had not yet left Medina owing to the difficulty of collecting sufficient transport for the march across the desert from Medina to Kassim. As regards the force with Ibn Rashid which Aarif Pasha was intended to help, the Minister of War said it was still in Kassim, apparently holding out there.

He mentioned also that reinforcements could arrive much easier from Medina than from the Euphrates, the route from Samawa by which the troops had come, being exceptionally long and difficult. I congratulated him on the rapid work done in railway construction by the troops working on the Hedjaz Railway recently opened to Maan. He said they had now eight Nizam battalions at work on the line which was being pushed on towards Medina, and many staff officers and men had gained valuable experience in railway construction which would be most useful training for work elsewhere.

The next railway he hoped they would build would be one from Angora to Sivas and on to Erzeroum, which would be of the greatest strategical value for bringing up Anatolian troops towards the Russian frontier.

I asked had not the Russians the first right of building railways in those districts, but he explained that arrangement was applicable only to concessions to be granted to foreign Companies and, as the Government itself intended to build the above line, such objection could not hold.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL,
Military Attaché.

No. 203.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 17.)

(No. 795.)
Therapia, October 11, 1904.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting the recent trial of thirty-three Armenians who were members of a secret society, and the exceptionally severe nature of the sentences passed upon them.

I am bringing the facts as reported by Mr. Longworth to the notice of the Sublime Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 203.

Consul Longworth to Sir N. O'Conor.

Trebizond, September 26, 1904.

Sir,

ON the 21st July, an Armenian merchant, named Gaidzak Arabian, was returning for the night to his country house at Zefanos, when a masked man assaulted him and stabbed him in the leg.

Three days later a paper was left at his town address wherein a contribution of 500*l.* for revolutionary purposes was asked of him by a certain date, and on the pain of death.

The letter was handed over to the authorities, who thereupon made several domiciliary visits and arrested a number of Armenians.

The trials ended on the 8th September, with the result that no less than thirty-three of the prisoners were pronounced guilty.

It will be seen from the annexed list that not a few of them are mere boys, and the sentences passed on them therefore cannot but be considered as extremely severe.

The lads had, no doubt, formed themselves into a sort of secret committee, with Hamparzoum Khedishian as President, Gaspar Zadighian as Secretary, Sirogan Tchobanian and Senekerim Fahmazian as Councillors, Minas Minassian and Aharon Yessayian as messengers, while the rest had voluntarily or compulsorily made themselves members of the league.

Yessayian, age 14, admitted to be Gaidzak Arabian's assailant; Zadighian, age 14, confessed to be the author of the letter; and Khedishian, age 22, prided himself on being the murderer of a young Armenian, whose body was found in April last in the vicinity of the town.

The Public Prosecutor, Loutfi Effendi, evinced during the trials a marked malevolence, while the President of the Court, Reshid Bey, who ten years ago lost his post at Erzeroum for befriending the Armenians, feared to show mercy. The latter, it is said, broke down three times in condemning the prisoners, and it is further added that, had any of my colleagues during my absence used their good offices in their behalf, the punishment meted out would have been more in keeping with the dictates of common sense and justice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Annex.

List of Armenian Prisoners at Trebizond convicted of Political Offences.

No.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.	Sentences.
1	Hamparzoun Khedishian ..	Shoemaker ..	22	Death.
2	Aharon Yessayian	Blacksmith ..	14	Life.
3	Hiradjin Markarian	Shop boy	17	"
4	Senekerim Fahmazian ..	.. .. ..	20	"
5	Sirogan Tchobanian	Silversmith ..	17	"
6	Aram Pampzian	Shoemaker ..	17	15 years.
7	Dirtad Israelian	Carpenter	17	"
8	Ghadjik Ghougasian	"	16	"
9	Garabed Kehayan	Villager	15	"
10	Hovanes Devian ..	Silversmith ..	15	"
11	Hovsep Kahadjian	Carpenter	20	"
12	Karekin Garabedian	Teacher	18	"
13	Karekin Taghmanian ..	Shop boy	16	"
14	Karekin Sarkisian	Teacher	22	"
15	Levon Yesayan	Tailor	18	"
16	Missak Zaroun	Shoemaker ..	16	"
17	Missak Minassian	Carpenter ..	16	"
18	Minas Minassian	Shop boy	17	"
19	Nishan Hovsian	"	22	"
20	Nishan Kahvedjian	Tailor	17	"
21	Nahabed Arzounimian ..	Blacksmith ..	17	"
22	Ohanes Kehayan	Villager	17	"
23	Ohanes Dabbashian	"	18	"
24	Ohanes Yeimian	"	16	"
25	Simon Minassian	Shop boy	18	"
26	Vartkes Khrimmian	.. .. ..	16	"
27	Yervant Hurehanian ..	Shop boy	20	"
28	Dirtad Pehlivanian	Blacksmith ..	18	10 years.
29	Gaspar Zadikian	.. .. ..	14	"
30	Kubriel Madilian	Villager	17	5 years.
31	Tateos Husisian	Blacksmith ..	14	"
32	Dikran Shamughian	Silversmith ..	27	1 year.
33	Messop Dachoian	.. .. ..	24	"

No. 204.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 17.)

(No. 796. Confidential.)
Therapia, October 11, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Sir N. O'Conor's despatch No. 772 of the 4th instant, forwarding a Report from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van upon the subject of the recent disturbances at that place, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of an interesting despatch from the same officer, containing the gist of conversations he has had with the Armenian revolutionary leader known as the "Doctor."

It is desirable that some Consular officer should visit the Mush and Talori districts at an early date, in order to see that the resettlement work undertaken by the Turkish officials has been properly carried out. Should Captain Tyrrell be unable to go, I would venture to suggest that I be authorized to instruct Mr. Heathcote, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 204.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 42.) *Van, September* 21, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that I have had two interviews with the leading revolutionist here, the "Doctor," mentioned in my No. 40.

When I left Mush the Armenian Murakhas there begged me to communicate with the revolutionists in Van if possible, and to prevent them from doing any further mischief; and I have no doubt that it was at his instigation that I was approached by this man shortly after my return to Van. The Doctor (for such is the only name by which he is known here) appears to be the chief representative of the European Committees in these parts, and to have a good deal of influence. He states that he was brought up at St. Petersburgh, and took his degree in medicine there.

It would be fruitless to detail our conversations, but the net result is that the revolutionists seem to be rather obstinate, and to cling to the idea that drastic measures on their part will lead to European intervention. It seems that they derive this hope from a section of the European (especially the French) press and from speeches reported to have been made by M. Delcassé and M. Anatole in France. They do not recognize that this section of the press probably only voices the opinion of irresponsible people, and does not bind any Government to take action. In fact, it seems as if the revolutionary Committees are being deceived by the very people whom they, in their turn, deceive by inaccurate reports and specially prepared news. The Doctor hinted that I had better not leave Van again, as something would certainly happen soon. To prevent this, he asked me if I could give any promise that, if the country were left in peace, reforms would be granted. I told him that such a promise was entirely beyond me, and I could only explain to him that the course I recommended was the only one to take, and give the best chance that the lot of the Armenian people would be ameliorated. This course was to cease active revolutionary movements at once, and to trust that the foreign Powers were sufficiently alive to the state of the country to induce the Turkish Government to carry out gradual reforms. I also told him that, in my opinion, no intervention by force was possible, and that only diplomatic measures could, in any case, be contemplated. He finally agreed to keep the revolutionists quiet, and assured me that he would allow nothing to disturb the tranquillity for a month. If, at the end of that period, I could hold out to him any definite hope of reforms being taken in hand he would stop the revolutionary movement in this part of the country altogether; if not, matters must take their course.

These are his words; but it is rather doubtful, to my mind, if the Committees have really delegated so much power to this man, and if he is able to carry out such a promise in its entirety.

As regards the temporary cessations, I believe he is competent, and certainly one hears absolutely nothing about revolutionists just now. The Doctor says that he has sent them all, including Antranik, across the border, but that they can come back whenever they are wanted.

That is the condition of affairs here now. The situation in Van has greatly improved, and it simply depends on the revolutionists whether there will be trouble later on or not.

I have informed my French colleague of the result of these conversations.

There were also some other interesting points about which your Excellency may like to hear.

The Doctor tried to impress upon me that the troubles are not due to professional revolutionists and Committees at all, but that, even without them, the people are so oppressed that they have reached the point when they must make an effort to free themselves. It is in response to this call of the people that the Committees are providing them with arms and leaders. This plausible theory is held by a good many, and it is worth while to refute it. The people as a whole are no doubt in sympathy with the end sought by the revolutionists—a better Government; but they are not willing to undergo the sufferings necessary to attain that end by the means which the revolutionists advocate. They would rather be left in peace to continue in the old way than have their villages burnt and themselves killed and imprisoned. I am assured by missionaries that in many villages the people complain that they have now three masters—the Government, the Kurds, and the revolutionists—and there are well authenticated instances of villagers being forced to sell their cattle and sheep in order to buy rifles from the revolutionists. Forced contributions to the revolutionary funds are also levied, as well as taxes by Government and impositions by Kurds, and the people are not grateful for this, whatever the revolutionists may say. In two cases the Doctor confirmed my views on points about which I had formed my own opinion, but could get no proofs. The first was that the villages destroyed in Mush, Sassun, and Talori were burned by the Armenians themselves before the soldiers reached them. I was glad to have his word for this, because it was the one thing which I could never get an Armenian to admit. The second was that Vartan Vartabed, the Armenian Murakhas of Mush, had been, and still is, in close sympathy and relations with the revolutionists. But there was hardly room for doubt on this point. The Doctor also said that the Armenian revolutionists meant to do in Russia as they did in Turkey, and that the work was going on there too. Though he spoke at first of an autonomous Armenia, to be carved out of Russia and Turkey, he afterwards said that the Committees would be satisfied simply with measures of reform leading to a good government for this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL.

No. 205.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October* 18.)

(No. 147.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October* 18, 1904.

I HAVE received the following telegram from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, dated yesterday:—

"Insurgents, having returned to lake, appeared in village of Narek on the 9th October. They killed one gendarme and escaped. Village was deliberately handed over to Kurds the next day; they completely plundered it, burnt it, and killed more than twenty inhabitants, the rest having fled. A certain Halill, officer of gendarmerie, and some gendarmes took active part.

"I have visited the place and carefully investigated matter. The above-mentioned Halill and the Kaimakam, Lutfi Bey, are responsible. Both the French Consul and myself have told the Vali that the punishment of these two is necessary.

"Special officer has been sent out by the Vali, and he is doing good work. About forty Kurds have been thrown into prison, and orders have been issued that the burnt houses shall be rebuilt, grain supplied, and the plunder restored. The inhabitants have returned.

"I intend to return there in order to see that these promises are being carried into effect."

No. 206.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 362.) *Foreign Office, October* 19, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 795 of the 11th instant, forwarding a copy of a report from His Majesty's Consul at Trebizond on the recent trial of certain Armenians who were members of a Secret Society, and the sentences passed on thirty-three of their number.

I approve your action in bringing the facts, as reported by Mr. Longworth, to the notice of the Turkish Government, and I shall be glad to learn what reply you receive.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 207.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 567.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October 20, 1904.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 796, Confidential, of the 11th instant, relative to the recent disturbances at Van.

I approve your proposal that a British Consular officer should visit the Moush and Talori districts at an early date in order to see that the work of resettlement has been properly carried out, and you are authorized to act as you suggest in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 208.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 152.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October 22, 1904.*

ARMENIA. Great distress in the districts of Moush, Talory, and more especially Genj, is reported by His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis.

He urges that permission be obtained for the head of the American Mission at Bitlis to distribute the relief which he possesses. Turkish Government do not view him favourably. In an interview which I had to-day with the Grand Vizier, I represented the matter. His Highness promises to send relief, and has already telegraphed for details.

As previously arranged, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van will visit the district next week in order to report on the resettlement of the refugees. He will be in a position to advise also as to the measure of assistance needed.

No. 209.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 24.)

(No. 802.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October 14, 1904.*

WITH reference to Sir N. R. O'Conor's despatch No. 729 of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus, giving further details concerning the Amman–Ma'an section of the Hedjaz Railway.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 209.

Consul Richards to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 52.)
Sir, *Damascus, September 28, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 46 of the 8th instant, in which I stated that I had been informed that the rails had been laid on the Hedjaz Railway during the last fortnight or so preceding the Sultan's Accession Day at the rate of 2 kilom. per diem, I have now the honour to confirm that statement which, moreover, it would appear, was considerably below the truth; I am assured by Colonel Izzet Bey, who is Assistant (Mnavin) to Kyazim Pasha, the Director-General of the Construction Works, that during the period mentioned the rails were being laid by a company of soldiers—say 150 men—who alone were employed on this kind of work, at the rate of 3 kilom. per day of nine hours.

I am under the impression that this is quite a record for speed. Izzet Bey tells me that the soldiers are now most expert in railway construction—are, in fact, quite as good

as trained workmen—with the additional advantage of being under discipline, and, therefore, infinitely less troublesome than civilians. As a matter of fact, with the exception of the culverts, bridges, stations, sheds, and all such buildings as require skilled labour, the work on the main line is now being carried on exclusively by the troops, of whom there are four battalions—say 3,200 men—actually employed.

I hear that there are now seventeen locomotives on the Hedjaz line, all imported from either Belgium or Germany, as well as eighty goods waggons (this seems an under-estimate, and will be made the subject of a further inquiry) and twenty passenger coaches, all from Germany.

It is reported that the section of the Haifa line, which will connect Jisr-el-Majamia on the Jordan with a point 2 kilom. to the south of Mezarib (12 kilom. from Dera'a) will cost about £T. 300,000, and will be completed, it is hoped, by the beginning of next May.

There is still a second layer of ballast to be laid over a distance of about 200 kilom. on the main line, and some thirty small bridges and culverts still incomplete between the stations of El-Hassa and Ma'an.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 210.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 24.)

(No. 804.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October 14, 1904.*

WITH reference to Sir N. R. O'Conor's despatch No. 733 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, transmitting a list of crimes alleged to have been perpetrated in the Mush and Bulanik districts since the 30th July, and reporting as to the work of resettlement of the Sasun refugees.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 210.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 46.)
Sir, *Bitlis, September 27, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 29 of the 20th June, I have the honour to transmit herewith a list of murders and other crimes alleged to have occurred in the Mush and Bulanik districts since the 30th July. This statement was, as I understand, drawn up by the Mush Bishopric for the information of Dr. Norton, United States' Consul at Kharput, who was then last week on his return from Van and Bitlis to his post. I am not in a position to verify the facts alleged, but they do not appear improbable.

It is also complained in this document that little or nothing has been done to supply the needs of the population, who have returned to Sasun, &c. It is stated that in some villages a certain amount of rebuilding has been effected, but that the greater number remain in their former ruined state. This would especially apply to the Cazas of Khian and Kulp in the Sandjak of Genj, where the work of relief appears to have been much mismanaged from the first.

As your Excellency is aware, the Vali of Bitlis has admitted to me that he had great difficulty in obtaining the funds necessary for this purpose, and the small amount available seems to have been expended mainly in the villages which belong to the Caza of Mush. The Governor-General is now, however, more optimistic, stating that money has been received, and that all that is necessary will be done in time.

The Bishopric puts the total population concerned at 7,637 and declares that they are all in urgent need of food and clothing for the winter, besides seed for sowing, cattle, and in most cases, houses as well. The Vali, on the other hand, declares that the majority had hidden their clothing and other stores, and have now

recovered them; that in most places building has progressed fairly, and that large numbers of cattle intrusted to neighbouring Kurds have been restored. Your Excellency probably knows from Captain Tyrrell's reports what was the actual state of the district at the time of his departure. Dr. Norton left Mush about a week ago proceeding to Kharput through Shenik, Geliguzan and Talori, and will be in a position to supplement this information.

The Bishopric declares that the inhabitants of Geligeniman, Gelimansur (in the Shenik Valley, but the Kulp Caza), and Talori are forbidden to return to their homes, and I am told that help has been refused to Hitenk* on the ground that the village was destroyed four years ago, and is, therefore not included in the present scheme of repatriation.

With regard to the first two cases, the Vali said long ago that there was some dispute as to ownership, but however that may be it seems hard that the people should be deprived of homes which they have certainly occupied, whether as owners or as tenants, for many years. As to Talori I have no information, nor do I know to what extent the people of Hitenk had returned to their village before the events of this year.

The Bishopric asserts that practically the whole of the Sasun district, and some twenty villages of the plain are in imminent danger of starvation unless a large measure of help is given before the winter which is approaching rapidly.

I am informed that the Vali proposes to visit Sasun, and even Talori shortly, but when I saw him three days ago, he said nothing to me of any such intention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 210.

List of Crimes and Excesses reported from Mush Plain and Bulanik.

(August and September, 1904.)

(From an Armenian source.)

No.	Date.	Place.	Remarks.
1	July 30	Zukhaou, north-west of Mush Plain	Village attacked by troops: 20 men, 10 women, and 4 children killed; 10 wounded.
2	August 2	Shervansheikh, Bulanik ..	Hasanauli Yusuf Zadé Dazih, with his followers, killed Dikran Nadoyan and his two servants, Bogos and Simon, and burnt a large quantity of hay.
3	" 3	Sheikhyakub, Bulanik	Hasanauli Kurds killed Bezo Sirkoyan and Sharo Hoveyan, and carried off 12 head of cattle and 250 sheep.
4	" 7	Megdi, north-west of Mush Plain	Alo and Havag, Hasanauli Kurds, attacked the village and killed B'ghalé and Gerbé, and drove off 280 sheep.
5	" 8	.. .. ..	Garo Nersesian, of Karkalu, Bulanik, died in prison in consequence of beating by Kurds.
6	" 9	Koms, north-west of Mush Plain	Mehmed Emin, of Mush, and his servant Dervish, killed Garo, Melko, Sahag, Haro, and Haik, and a woman named Zezan.

* Also called Hotik.

No.	Date.	Place.	Remarks.
7	August 10	Shemlag, Mush Plain	Jadigli Mehmed killed Magar in his field. Antzarli Kurds killed Murdo.
8	" 19	Gavars, Mush Plain	Hamze killed Kourshud Azizian, the head of the village.
9	" 19	Teherig, near Mush	A Turk named Ibrahim killed Nado Helgatian.
10	" 21	Hergerd, north-west of Mush Plain	Two Kurds killed Mateos, Marcar, and Tavo, and carried off some cattle.
11	" 21	Semal, 4 hours south of Mush ..	Artin was killed while bringing salt from Mush to his village.
12	" 22	Megdi, north-west of Mush Plain (see No. 4)	Troops plundered the church and houses, wounded one woman and violated five.
13	" 23	Kertsank, Mush Plain	Mamé Balakli violated Nubar, wife of Solig.
14	" 28	Border of Mush and Bulanik districts	The son of Slo, of Jirdangner, violated the daughter of Garabed, of Bendekhner, lately killed, and compelled her to profess Islam.
15	" 29	Orgnotz, Mush Plain	Kurds attacked the village, killing Egho Tatarian and wounding Mogré.
16	Sept. 17	Alvarinj, Mush Plain	Ibo, a Balakli Kurd, killed Sempad, head of the village, and severely wounded Hagop Derderian.

(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

Bitlis, September 27, 1904.

No. 211.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 24.)

(No. 809.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October 17, 1904.*

WHEN calling at the Sublime Porte to-day I spoke to the Grand Vizier about the general situation in the Armenian districts of Van, Talori, Mush, and Bitlis. I said that the news the Embassy had received from Van showed that the recent trouble there had been successfully suppressed and with but little bloodshed, though a somewhat ugly feature of the incident had been the fact that one regiment stationed in the town had undoubtedly got out of hand for a short time. My information, however, led me to think that vigilance should not be relaxed, because there would appear to be a danger that the revolutionary leaders and their bands, who, there was reason to believe, had all crossed into Russia or Persia, might return unless the frontier was carefully guarded.

His Highness replied that his last advices from Van were to the effect that all was quiet there, and that snow had already fallen on the mountains round—a fact which it was hoped would serve as a deterrent to any further operations this year; but he promised to send instructions to the officials responsible for the frontier not to relax their vigilance.

Turning to the Mush and Talori districts, I said that my information showed that, although the houses of the refugees had for the most part been rebuilt in accordance with His Highness' promise, there was great destitution among the people, both of the mountains and plain, and that all relief had ceased with the departure of Captain Tyrrell.

Ferid Pasha replied that he had received most satisfactory assurances from the Vali of Bitlis that all was being done that was possible for the people. He added that the Turkish Government could not go on providing them indefinitely with food and clothing. The American Consul, Dr. Norton, moreover, who had just returned to Kharput, had visited the districts, and had reported that the local authorities had acted

very well. The accompanying extract from Dr. Norton's Report to the American Minister shows, however, that he found much distress among the villages.

Bearing in mind your Lordship's despatch No. 354 of the 8th instant, I took the opportunity at this point to ask the Grand Vizier whether there would be any objection on the part of the Turkish Government to relief being given to the more destitute from foreign funds. His Highness hesitated for a moment, and then said No, he did not think so, but that it would be difficult to distribute it. He then added hastily that the people to be relieved were naturally very lazy, and that he did not think that it would be at all good for them to feel that they could easily get help from abroad. Growing bolder in his evident desire not to accept foreign aid, he said that if I would find out from the British Consul at Bitlis which villages were specially in want he would see that their needs were supplied, and would undertake that the necessary funds for the purpose would be forthcoming.

From the Grand Vizier's manner more than from his language I gathered that the idea of foreign aid for the sufferers from the recent troubles was distasteful to him, but I have no doubt that he would accept it if it were considered advisable to press it. I will communicate with Mr. Vice-Consul Heathcote at Bitlis, and report further.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 211.

Extract of Report from Dr. Norton.

IN advance of my full report on the results of my observations during this tour, with numerous accompanying documents, which will be dispatched by the next post, I would be derelict to my duty did I not report, without loss of time, upon the condition of the Sasun population.

The survivors of the recent massacre number nearly 10,000. They have saved little but their lives. Nearly every house in the region was completely plundered and then burned. Worst of all, their flocks and herds—practically the only source of food, raiment, and income—were completely swept away. These unfortunates, after receiving for a short period an allowance from the Government of 1 cent *per capita* and *per diem* for subsistence, now are without food and without a prospect of food for the coming winter. The diseases usually following upon fright, exposure, exhaustion, and insufficient food are rapidly becoming epidemic, especially among the children.

Progress has been made in restoring the burned dwellings, so that probably the question of a bare shelter before the advent of winter will be settled in most cases. Sufficient firewood can be also secured without great difficulty.

There remain the three vital questions of warm clothing, of bedding, of food, for which no provision is made. The situation is practically identical with that of many parts of Macedonia twelve months ago, although, while the number involved is less, the remoteness from the sea-coast and the greater severity of the climate increase the danger of widespread suffering and mortality.

The helplessness of this mountain folk in their need is heightened by the enforcement of administrative measures which prevent them from leaving their ruined villages and seeking assistance or work in more favoured localities.

The case is one appealing most strongly to the sympathies of the benevolent. Unless aid is rendered promptly, few may be left to receive it. The region is bare and desolate. Clothing, blankets, and food must be brought from outside before the approaches to the mountains are blocked by snow.

It should be mentioned that several thousand destitute villagers upon the great plain of Mush, adjoining the Sasun Mountains, are in equally sore straits. Their advantage over the Sasun folk lies in the fact that they are less exposed to the rigour of winter, and they can at least beg from surrounding villagers, where the torch has not brought destruction.

No. 212.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October 24.*)

(No. 810.)

My Lord, *Therapia, October 24, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 795 of the 14th instant, upon the subject of the recent condemnation at Trebizond of a large number of Armenian youths who had formed themselves into a secret society, one to death and the others to heavy sentences of imprisonment, I have the honour to transmit herewith a further Report from His Majesty's Consul at Trebizond dealing with the matter, and inclosing copies of letters received on the subject.

I to-day called the attention of the Grand Vizier to the incident, and represented that the sentences passed upon mere boys were excessively severe. I said that although probably some of the older ringleaders deserved serious punishment, there was reason to believe that many of the boys had either entered the society under compulsion or because they did not realize what they were doing. I was even assured that one of them, Aharon Yessayian, aged 14, who had been convicted of assaulting the Armenian, Arabian, at night, had been terrorized into doing so.

Ferid Pasha said that secret societies for a revolutionary purpose were becoming dangerously rife among Armenians, but promised to cause an inquiry to be made in conjunction with the Minister of Justice, with a view to seeing whether steps might not be taken to mitigate the sentences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 212.

Consul Longworth to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Trebizond, October 4, 1904.*

I WOULD refer to my despatch of the 26th ultimo, and report further as follows:—

The mothers of most of the young Armenians, who were sentenced here ruthlessly as grave political offenders, have presented a Petition to the Consuls, soliciting intervention in the name of humanity. They are all wretchedly poor, and unable to secure, therefore, at the Porte or the Palace some clemency for their children.

The case of the prisoners was made by us to-day the subject of consultation. One of my colleagues suggested our sending identic telegrams to Constantinople, and another a collective note to the Vali. It was ultimately decided, however, that we should each report the affair separately, and do nothing more in the matter than draw the attention of our respective Embassies to this instance of what is believed to be a gross miscarriage of justice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

P.S. *October 5.*—The annexed are copies of letters on the above subject I have just received from Dr. Crawford, the American missionary at Trebizond.

H. Z. L.

(Annex.)

Rev. L. S. Crawford, D.D., to Consul Longworth.

American Mission House, Trebizond, October 5, 1904.

My dear Sir,

In welcoming you back to Trebizond, I wish to express sincere regret that you could not have been here during and before the trial of the Armenian "boys" now in prison. Our deeply lamented friend, your late Dragoman, Mr. Hékimian, probably hastened his death in his kind and active efforts in their behalf.

Allow me to bring before you the cases of three of these boys:—

No.	Name.	Age.	Remarks
		Years.	
1	Iavon Yessayan ..	18	Tailor's apprentice (Protestant).
2	Aharon Yessayan ..	14–15	Blacksmith and tinner's apprentice (Protestant).
3	Durad Israelian ..	14	Carpenter's apprentice (Gregorian, but godson of Protestant, and formerly in our school).

In regard to No. 1, condemned for fifteen years, I feel that the whole matter is a mistake. He is spoken of by all as a good, straightforward, industrious boy. If his name was recorded with others on "such a Committee," it was against his protest. His brother, No. 2, condemned for life, is not a vicious boy; he is well spoken of by his master, but he is full of fun, with a careless, happy nature, and, under the influence of a few unprincipled leaders, got into this thing, not knowing to what it would lead. Finally, at the threat of losing his own life (in the same horrible manner that another young Armenian had been killed a few months previous) he drew the knife on Mr. Arabian.

These two boys have been the main support of their parents, who are physically able to earn almost nothing. They and the little sister are now thrown on charity, for themselves and for the food they must carry daily to these boys in prison.

Of No. 3 I have not known so much since he was a very small boy, but have inquired among the neighbours, who say he is not a bad boy. His mother, a widow, has denied herself to send her children to school, and this lad was now starting in to learn a trade, and was already helping his mother some. The neighbours declare that he was frightened to join this society, and was told that the money collected was to go towards building the new Gregorian Church.

Trusting that your influence will accomplish a great deal, I remain, &c.

(Signed) L. S. CRAWFORD.

P.S.—I inclose for your perusal a letter from Mr. Peet.

L. S. C.

(Inclosure.)

Mr. W. W. Peet to Rev. L. S. Crawford, D.D.

Bible House, Constantinople, September 16, 1904.

Dear Mr. Crawford,

I have yours of the 10th September in regard to the case of the Armenian boys and young men who have lately been arrested and tried for murder. I have read your letter to Mr. Boyajian. He says that this case is outside of his province. As the head of a community dependent upon the Government he would not be allowed to interfere in regard to a matter that had passed through the Courts. An attempt to secure the reversal of a decision of the Courts will have to be taken up in some other way. The appeal to Mr. Longworth is in the right direction, for he can appeal on the ground of humanity and mercy. I will try and ascertain if Mr. Longworth is in the city, and, if he is, will endeavour to get an interview with him. The case, as you represent it, appears to be a difficult one to interfere in, but then you should understand that no sentence of the kind you describe will be put into execution until it is approved in Constantinople.

If the Court of Appeals in Constantinople finds any error in the application of the law, a new trial will be ordered.

This gives a chance for the Attorneys and others interested in the case to do some work in the direction of convincing the Court that they have made an error. I presume some steps in this direction have already been made.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) W. W. PEET.

No. 213.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 24.)

(No. 817.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, October* 18, 1904.

WITH reference to Sir N. R. O'Conor's despatch No. 717 of the 6th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis respecting the participation of Kurds in the fighting at Shamiran on the 11th August.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 213.

Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 49.)

Sir, *Bitlis, October* 4, 1904.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 6th September, calling for further information on the subject of the participation of Kurds in the fighting at Shamiran on the 11th August, I have the honour to submit such details as I have been able to gather from four persons of that neighbourhood.

The inhabitants of Shamiran and Chorbur all seem to have fled when the fight began; but if I am able later to obtain more testimony on the subject, I shall not fail to inform your Excellency.

The declarations appear sincere, and though they would not carry much weight as evidence in a Court of Justice, I think they do show that Kurds were present in large numbers.

1. *A Resident of Tukh, two hours South-East of Shamiran.*

He was in Tukh on the day of the fight, and in the morning saw six Kurds hurrying towards Shamiran. Villagers who had risen earlier than himself told him that many had gone before these.

A Kurd of Angiasur who had been for two days in Tukh took two Armenian ploughmen to work for him at Tadvan, but meeting some Kurds of his village on their way to Shamiran he at once dismissed his workmen, saying that he was going with them.

My informant heard some Kurds on their return through Tukh praising the courage of the insurgents, and saying, "We were more than a thousand, besides the troops and gendarmes, and yet we could not beat them."

Villagers of Tukh, who fled from a search for arms a few days later, saw at the village of Angiasor some sheep which they recognized as of a breed peculiar to Shamiran. They also saw carcases of sheep there (an unusual sight, as Kurds seldom eat mutton, and indicating some recent addition to their flocks).

2. *A Native of Chorbur, the Village near Shamiran, which was plundered.*

He was reaping when the fight began, and while returning to the village he was overtaken by many Kurds coming from the south-east. He saw about 300, and there were some women with them.

He says that his own village of Chorbur was plundered by the Kurds of Morkh, whose leader is Zamerkhan Aga, of Chapkis. He did not see Zamerkhan, but heard from others that he was present. Among others a Kurd of Morkh told him that Zamerkhan was there and had just burnt a haystack.

He heard a certain Slo of Nist say "with the troops and all we were over 2,000," but he himself had fled during the engagement.

3. *A Native of Tadvan, an hour East of Cherlur, on the Lake.*

He fled to a boat when the firing was heard, and saw from a great distance many Kurds passing towards Shamiran. He afterwards heard a sergeant of gendarmerie say, "We were many more than a thousand."

4. *A Native of Shamiran.*

He was in his village for half-an-hour after the fighting began, and only saw about a dozen Kurds, men of Nist, on the west. He then fled to the mountain. On his return some days later he heard that the soldiers at Alamet Khan were in possession of some of the Shamiran cattle, which would be restored on application. He and others went and recovered some animals. A soldier then who had taken part in the fight told him that there were more than 1,000 Kurds present, taking little share in the fighting beyond occasionally firing into the air, and waiting till the evening for plunder. He said that some animals were driven off by them also in the day-time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. J. HEATHCOTE.

No. 214.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October 28.*)

(No. 153.) *Constantinople, October 28, 1904.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

ARMENIA. With reference to my telegram No. 152 of the 22nd instant, I have the honour to report the departure of His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the 27th instant for Bitlis.

No. 215.

Acting Consul Monahan to Sir N. O'Conor.—(*Received at Foreign Office, October 29.*)

(No. 52.) *Bussorah, October 7, 1904.*
Sir,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 37 of the 28th July last, I have the honour to report that disturbances, in which Sadoun Pasha is concerned, having lately broken out in the Muntafik region, on the Euphrates, the Acting Mutessarif of Nasrieh, who had been confirmed in the post of Mutessarif there, was, after only few days' tenure of that post, removed from it a week ago owing to the representations of the Acting Vali, and Hamid Pasha, Commander of Redifs, has been sent from here as Acting Mutessarif and as Commander of troops of the Muntafik.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 216.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October 31.*)

(No. 825.) *Constantinople, October 22, 1904.*
My Lord,

AS I had the honour to inform your Lordship in my telegram No. 152 of to-day's date, I called this afternoon at the Sublime Porte and saw the Grand Vizier upon the subject of the distress prevailing in the districts inhabited by the victims of this year's Armenian revolutionary movements.

I told Ferid Pasha that I had received a telegram from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting that reliable persons who had just returned from the Sasún district, where they had been employed on the construction of barracks, stated that the people were, many of them, without proper shelter, that they had neither food nor clothing, and were daily dying of hunger and exposure. The distress appeared to be especially severe in the remoter districts in the Genj Province, but it was, on the whole, general throughout the region.

His Highness replied that he had already, in consequence of the representations I made to him on the 17th instant, as reported in my despatch No. 809 of the 17th instant, telegraphed to ask why the distribution of relief had ceased, and for details as to where it is most severe. He repeated his promise that he would send money, of which he had £T. 1,000 or more, that he could dispose of for the purpose, for the assistance of the distressed people.

I thanked his Highness, and added that His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, as it had been arranged between himself and Sir N. O'Conor, was proceeding next week to the districts in question, in order to see how the re-settlement work had been carried out. He would be well able to furnish us with reliable data as to the condition of the people, and I was authorizing him to distribute a sum of 120*l.* that had been sent to me, among the most needy cases that came under his observation. I have received this money from His Majesty's Minister at Addis Abbaba, to whom it was entrusted for distribution among their distressed compatriots by Armenians resident in Abyssinia.

The Grand Vizier said that he had no objection to offer to Captain Tyrrell's visit, and would at once send orders that he should be rendered all possible assistance by the local authorities.

In the telegram from Mr. Heathcote, to which allusion is made in the earlier part of this despatch, a request is preferred that the head of the American Mission at Bitlis may be authorized to distribute food and clothing with funds at his disposal. He has already sought the permission of the local authorities, but fears that it will not be granted unless orders to that effect are sent from here. I did not deem it advisable to mention this to the Grand Vizier to-day, as I understand that Mr. Cole is not a *persona grata* in the eyes of the Turkish authorities, and, as reported in my despatch referred to above, Ferid Pasha, in the course of our previous conversation, showed a marked disinclination to welcome the offer of foreign assistance.

For these reasons it seemed to me better not to raise the question again until I had received your Lordship's instructions upon the subject. Moreover, we shall be in a better position to judge of the amount of assistance wanted when we have received Captain Tyrrell's reports.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY

No. 217.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(*Received October 31.*)

(No. 827.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October 23, 1904.*

I HAD the honour to repeat to your Lordship, in my telegram No. 157 of the 18th instant, a telegraphic report from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van of the destruction of the village of Narek and the murder of twenty of the inhabitants by Kurds.

I told the Grand Vizier of the incident yesterday, and said that there could be no doubt as to the truth of the report which had reached me, as Captain Tyrrell had himself proceeded to the spot and assured himself, not only that the village had been plundered and destroyed by the Kurds and twenty of the inhabitants killed, but that the village had been wilfully handed over to them by the local authorities, whilst an officer of gendarmerie and certain gendarmes had taken part in the proceedings. A complaint had been lodged with the Vali, who had done his duty on hearing of the incident, against the Kaïmakam, Lutfi Bey, and the officer of gendarmerie, both of whom deserved punishment. I expressed my regret at having to support a complaint against Lutfi Bey, as he had hitherto proved himself a good official, but unfortunately local authorities seemed to loose their heads where Armenians were concerned.

The Grand Vizier had some knowledge of the affair, but was not in possession of any details. He promised that he would telegraph at once for particulars, and that, if there was occasion, steps would be taken to punish the offenders.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 218.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 31.)

(No. 833.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October 25, 1904.*

WITH reference to Sir Nicholas O'Conor's despatch No. 583 of the 19th July, stating that he had instructed His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo to proceed to Ourfa with a view to his visit exercising a wholesome influence on the authorities, who were allowing the state of the district between Aleppo and Diarbekir to become so discontented as seriously to threaten all trade between those important centres, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of two despatches from Mr. Barnham, reporting on the state of affairs in the neighbourhood in question.

I will take an early opportunity of calling the attention of the Grand Vizier to the very unsatisfactory conditions revealed by Mr. Barnham and the complete paralysis of trade resulting from them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 218.

Consul Barnham to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 40. Confidential.)
Sir, *Ourfa, October 1, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I arrived in Ourfa on Thursday, the 23rd ultimo.

When I sent my dragoman to Bekir Pasha, commanding the troops at Aleppo, to request an escort, his Excellency showed a strange reluctance to grant one, and much uneasiness as to the object of my journey. Before leaving Aleppo I found an explanation of this in a strong rumour which began to circulate in the bazaars that fresh fighting had occurred near Ourfa. When I crossed the Euphrates at Biredjek I received authentic news that on Friday, the 16th ultimo, a sharp engagement had taken place at Joulab, a district five hours north-east of Ourfa, between the Milli tribe under Ibrahim Pasha and the Kara-Kechilies under Dirahi Bey, brother of that Khalil Bey who fled to Ourfa after the fight of last June, and that a small force of mounted infantry sent out from Ourfa to intercept them had been attacked by Ibrahim Pasha and cut up.

Thirty-four mofrizés (mule-mounted men) commanded by a Sagh Kol Aghassi (adjutant) and Yuzbashi Hadji Youssouf, came upon the opposing forces of Hamidiés, and, taking up a position on a hill within range, fired a few shots in their direction by way of warning. As no notice was taken of this and Ibrahim Pasha's men were closing in upon the Kara-Kechilies, the Kol Aghassi announced his intention of riding over to speak with Ibrahim Pasha, and took with him the Yuzbashi and six soldiers. When, however, they came near to the spot where Ibrahim Pasha was stationed, the Kol Aghassi lost his courage and ran away; the others, however, continued to advance, but were cut down, the Yuzbashi being transfixed by spears and badly mutilated. This officer had the reputation of being brave and capable. He was on duty at Ourfa at the time of the massacre and saved many lives.

Of the other soldiers, seventeen were wounded, but escaped to Ourfa, where they were treated at the German Mission Hospital. Of the Kara-Kechilies the leader, Dirahi Bey, and a son of Khalil, were captured by Ibrahim Pasha. The number killed on the side of the Kara-Kechilies was from thirty to forty; on that of Ibrahim Pasha, uncertain, though probably less. About thirty Kara-Kechilies escaped into Ourfa, and were treated at the German Hospital, where I saw one man who had been transfixed by a spear from chest to back, and who is recovering.

Ibrahim Pasha captured about twenty rifles, thirty mules, a few horses, and three boxes of ammunition. To replace the stock of mules, which has been depleted by these raids of the Hamidiés, a subscription was raised in Ourfa just after I arrived. There is apparently no money in the Treasury for the purpose.

Khalil Bey, Chief of the Kara-Kechilies, being still at Ourfa, Ibrahim Pasha has sent him a conciliatory message, and requested him to come out to his camp near Joulab, but the authorities do not permit it and have imprisoned him.

It is evident that the authority of Ibrahim Pasha is paramount outside the walls of Ourfa and throughout the region between Ourfa and Verenshehir. He is hard on the rich, but very often a friend to the poor. On the one hand, Mahmoud Nedim Bey, Ojak Zadé, and other Notables of Ourfa revile him because he has robbed them of thousands of cattle and stopped the export trade. Kurdish Chiefs who offend him are carried off to his tent, stripped, and exposed in chains to the rays of the sun until they purchase their liberty by surrendering flocks worth many hundreds of pounds.

On the other hand, Armenians in the Ourfa plain look upon him as a friend. He has granted them protection on payment of a small tribute, and they are free from all the petty persecutions of the tax-gatherers and the billetting of soldiers and zaptiehs.

His protection is also assured to one or two Moslem villages in the plain which provide the corn used for the American Orphanage, for by their charity and care of the wounded, both the American and German Missions have won his regard.

The poorer classes in Ourfa, alike Moslem and Christian, are attracted by these stories of his magnanimity, and are often heard to say that they would gladly exchange the rule of the Mutessarif for that of this Kurdish Chief.

The new Mutessarif, Mustapha Nouri Pasha, counts for very little in the matter. During the few days that he has been in office, he has made a good impression by his readiness to improve the condition of the city and promote the building of roads outside, but he is a man who has passed his entire official life in Rounelin, and possibly, until he came to Ourfa, had never seen a Kurd. I saw the Mutessarif two or three times, and did not fail to impress upon him that, in view of the terrible experiences which they had undergone eight years ago, the welfare of the Christian population of Ourfa and its neighbourhood would always be a matter of concern to your Excellency, and that the present state of things outside the city was fraught with danger.

It is, however, a situation which cannot be remedied on the spot, nor in Aleppo, but at Constantinople.

I would here record my impression that the Moslems and Christians of Ourfa are on very good terms.

This, perhaps, is the result of a natural reaction after the massacres, but it has much to do with the good work done by the American and German Missions. There is, however, an element of danger in Ourfa.

The military command is at present in the hands of a certain Mehemet Pasha, of whom I have heard a very bad account. He is at present Acting Commander—

1. Of the Hamidiés;
2. Of the regular forces (Nizamié);
3. Of the reserves (Redifs); and
4. Of the gendarmerie.

That all these functions, which imply obedience to a separate higher authority, should be vested in the hands of one man, who, I am assured, by the Armenian Vartabad, is thoroughly bad and hostile to Christians, is a matter for concern, quite apart from the attitude of Ibrahim Pasha.

I would very respectfully point out to your Excellency that only His Majesty the Sultan can put a stop to the destruction of life and property which is going on outside Ourfa and in the Diarbekir vilayet.

Ibrahim Pasha attacks the regular troops because he refuses to recognize their authority. He asserts that he alone is charged by the Sultan to maintain order in the desert. Every conceivable means have been taken to inform His Majesty of what is going on. Successive Valis of Aleppo and Mutessarifs of Ourfa have reported events by telegraph direct to the Palace. Merchants of Ourfa and Suverek have telegraphed piteous appeals, and Osman Pasha of Suverek and Mahmoud Nedim Bey of Ourfa are now in Constantinople knocking at the Palace door. The general

conviction here is that His Majesty does know the truth, but that he has a predilection for Ibrahim Pasha. The latter is constantly sending money to the Palace through the hands of a banker in Diarbekir; every year he sends beautiful mares to the Sultan and caravans of butter for the Imperial kitchens. I am assured that he always anticipates reproof for such an outrage as the fight at Joulab by promptly sending a large sum of money to the Palace. It is possible, however, that these offerings go to some high official in the Palace, who has made it his business to keep His Majesty in ignorance of what is going on.

A nephew of Osman Pasha of Suverek called upon me late one evening and gave a terrible picture of the state of things in the Caza of Suverek. He told me that there are 500 villages in that caza, most of which have been pillaged, and that his family, the chief Moslem house in the district, which owns nearly 300 of them, has been utterly ruined; that every member of his family was in hiding, his uncle, Osman Pasha, having fled to Constantinople, another uncle to Diarbekir, while he himself had fled to Ourfa, leaving everything at the mercy of the destroyer. He told me that at Suverek, much, perhaps the greater part, of the raiding is done by the Kara-Kechilies, though his own family had suffered most from the enmity of Ibrahim Pasha. Last year he had grown and exported 2,500 hatmans of rice; this season, when a similar crop was nearly ready, Ibrahim Pasha had cut off the water supply, and then sent in his animals, which had destroyed everything. He told me that during the coming winter food will be very dear, and next winter there will be famine in that region, because the villagers will have no seed left to sow next year's crop. Many Armenian refugees from the Kara-Kechili district have come into Ourfa who told me that about ten days before, three villages near Suverek, known as Nisibin, Karadjak, and Khalokyan, had been pillaged. Order can only be restored by the removal of Ibrahim Pasha and the Kara-Kechili leaders, and the maintenance of a stronger garrison at Ourfa.

It is unlikely that now, when he knows what a feeling of exasperation is abroad, Ibrahim Pasha would obey an order to go to Constantinople, or in any way risk his liberty. It would be necessary to send a strong force against him, commanded by resolute trustworthy officers—not men like the Kol Aghassi, who ran away at Joulab. If nothing is done, things will go from bad to worse. With each successful fight Ibrahim Pasha increases his stock of rifles and ammunition, and, consequently, his number of fighting men, and, if so, he may ere long carry out his threat of attacking Ourfa. It is estimated that Ibrahim Pasha could call to arms some 9,000 or 10,000 men—half of them from his own tribe, the Milli, the remainder from other tribes near Mardin—and that he could secure the help of certain Arabs, of many Circassians, and of the so-called "Ges." The latter are Armenians who became Mahommedans, adopting the Kurdish dress, language, and habits of life. They are said to number about 600 tents, and to be fierce fighting men. The name "Ges" is an Armenian word meaning "half," and is supposed to describe them as half Armenian and half Kurd.

When the Hamidié force came into existence the men were not armed by the Government with rifles. They were only served out to them while performing drill, and were returned to the barracks at the end of the training season. About five years ago, however, there was a great scandal at Ourfa, when it was discovered that hundreds of rifles had been secretly removed from the barracks and sold to the Hamidiés. When last Ibrahim Pasha visited Constantinople the men who accompanied him returned armed with rifles, and before and after that their stock has been steadily increasing as the result of their small fights with the regular troops. They appear to have considerably more than 1,000 Martinis. That they prefer to use the spear when fighting among themselves is shown by the fact that all the men brought into Ourfa from Joulab had spear wounds.

The military force at Ourfa consists of 350 cavalry, part of which are Arabs from Aleppo, and part are themselves Hamidiés. There should also be 100 mule-mounted infantrymen, but at present about forty of them are away collecting taxes. There are also two old guns in front of the serai used for saluting on fête days.

There is, however, nothing wrong in Ourfa itself except the presence of the Acting Commander, Mehemet Pasha, and the fact that the garrison ought to be increased and the officers be good men. I believe there would be no difficulty about the removal of Mehemet Pasha, as the appointment of a regular Commander of the troops is, I understand, under discussion, but probably this appointment involves much correspondence between Zeki Pasha, who is the head of the Hamidiés, and the Mushir of Damascus.

As things stand, trade between Aleppo and Diarbekir is impossible unless caravans make a considerable detour. I ask myself what I should do if the goods or cattle of British subjects fell into the hands of the Hamidiés, and I come to the conclusion that my best course would be to ignore the local authorities, and apply for redress direct to Ibrahim Pasha.

It is unfortunate that I should have no Consular Agent in Ourfa who would supply me with regular and trustworthy information respecting the movements of the Hamidiés. The distance is too great for me to repeat this visit without neglecting my work at Aleppo, where I am alone. Under these circumstances, I have drawn up a small telegraphic code covering all conceivable contingencies in connection with the movements of Ibrahim Pasha, and, in case of necessity, the Superintendent of the American Mission at Ourfa will make use of it when she wishes to communicate news of importance.

In conclusion, I beg to thank your Excellency for having sent me on this mission, which was singularly well-timed. Although the authorities have long known that I intended to visit Ourfa, the fact that I started the very day on which the fight at Joulab was reported at Aleppo has convinced them that I am instructed to report upon the Hamidiés question.

At Ourfa many persons interested in this matter came to see me at night, taking every precaution to evade the police who were stationed outside the house, and all seemed to take it for granted that I had come expressly to hear and report.

I do not attach much importance to the threats of Ibrahim Pasha that he will attack Ourfa, but possibly the mere report of such an intention on his part would induce His Majesty to remove him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 218.

Consul Barnham to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 42.) Confidential.

Sir, *Aintab, October 5, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 40, Confidential, of the 1st instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that on that day Khalil Bey, the leader of the Kara-Kechilies, was released from prison, and left Ourfa for his encampment near Suverek, and that his brother, Dirabi Bey, has also been released by Ibrahim Pasha, both events being the result of a telegram received from Constantinople.

It appears that Ibrahim Pasha received a telegram urging him to conciliate the Kara-Kechilies, and it is related by one who was in the Pasha's tent when Dirabi departed that Ibrahim Pasha cooked a cup of coffee with his own hands, and offered it to Dirabi as an earnest of friendship, but that the latter refused it with scorn, vowing that he would not rest until he had his revenge. There has long been a blood feud between these families, which has been greatly embittered by recent events, and certainly will not be set at rest by any order or entreaty from Constantinople. I shall no doubt hear in due course that fighting has been renewed. Ibrahim Pasha has also been called upon to surrender the men who killed the Yuzbashi and soldiers at Joulab. He appears, on the one hand, unwilling to give up men of his own tribe, and, on the other, he is not disposed to defy the Government, so he has replied that the soldiers were killed by men of the "Ges" tribe, of whom I gave some description in my earlier report. The loss of an officer and a few soldiers has aroused the indignation of the authorities more than all the raiding which has devastated the country.

The Kol Aghassi who deserted at Joulab is now before a court-martial at Ourfa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 219.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received October 31.)

(No. 835.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October 26, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 827 of the 23rd instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting a final interview with the Armenian revolutionary leader, the "Doctor."

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 219.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 47.)
Sir, *Van, October 4, 1904.*

IN continuation of my No. 42 of the 21st September, I have the honour to report that I have had a final interview with the revolutionary leader, the "Doctor."

He had sent me a letter in which he said that excesses were being committed by Turkish troops and siyyara gendarmerie in the district of Gargar, and that the people there had abandoned their villages and fled to the mountains; and begging me to go there and help the Armenians.

A few days previously I had heard that the people of the villages of Havatzor were complaining of the actions of certain revolutionists from Van, who were forcing them to buy arms, and carrying on their revolutionary propaganda in so open a manner as to have already attracted the attention of neighbouring Kurds. These villagers feared that the Government, on seeing what was going on, would deem it necessary to send soldiers, and that, as usual, the people, and not the revolutionists, would be the sufferers. I went to see the "Doctor" and told him that, under the circumstances, I did not see how he could expect me to go to Gargar. I did not care to take the responsibility of asking permission to leave Van while the revolutionists were behaving as they were in Havatzor, as at any moment the Government might decide to take action against them there, and then there would probably be trouble in the vicinity, if not in Van itself. Also that it was believed by the Turks (and such had been my own impression) that a band of revolutionists had taken up its position in the hills of Gargar, and the result was only to be expected. I said that if he would withdraw the propagandists from Havatzor, so as to give no excuse for military operations there during my absence, and would absolutely and entirely cease from revolutionary measures of any sort while I was away, I would ask for leave to visit Gargar, and see if the state of the people there was as bad as he said it was, and if I could do anything to alleviate their hardships. He would not give me a decided promise, but said that he hoped to be able to do so, but must consult with other people.

A couple of days later he wrote me a letter, the gist of which was that if I was disposed to lay down conditions before visiting Gargar, they would do without a Consular visit to that place; and that the revolutionists were determined to go on with their work until the "selfish and heartless politicians of Europe" should be obliged to intervene.

So it seems that the revolutionists are obstinate, and that we can not expect them to listen to reason or advice. There is, however, another circumstance which leaves room for hope that wiser counsels may prevail.

Dr. Ussher, of the American Mission here, has just returned from a visit to Russia. While there he saw the Catholicos at Echmiadzin and the revolutionists at Igdir. He appears to have put the position fairly before them, and to have produced some effect on them. His statement is that 600 men had crossed, or were on the point of crossing, the frontier into Turkey, but that on his representations, and by the special intervention of the Catholicos, these were all recalled, and he was told that orders were being sent to the revolutionists in Van to cease their activity.

With reference to the revolutionists' report about Gargar, mentioned above, I may explain that Gargar is a district south of the lake, part of which is in the Vilayet of Van and part in that of Bitlis. The portion in the Van Vilayet is in the Caza of

Kiavash, which has a very good Kaïmakam, Lutfi Bey, who has visited Gargar personally, and I do not think that he would permit the excesses complained of by the revolutionists. The Vali also assures me that there is not a word of truth in the reports of undue severity in Gargar of Van. When I was passing through Karchikan, the adjoining district to the north, on my way here from Mush, I made particular inquiries about Gargar, and was told by the Armenians in Karchikan that nothing had happened there of which to complain. From the mention of siyyara gendarmerie (of which there are none in the Van Vilayet), and of a certain notorious Ali Bey, Cherkess, in the revolutionists' report, it would seem that they were referring to Gargar of Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL.

No. 220.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 17.)

(No. 837. Secret.) *Constantinople, October 28, 1904.*

[PETROLEUM Concessions in Vilayets of Mosul and Bagdad.
Transmits supposed Agreement for working.]

No. 221.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 7.)

(No. 841.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October 31, 1904.*

IN discussing the general situation with the Grand Vizier to-day of the districts inhabited by Armenians, his Highness said that if I would give him time he would see that justice was done in the matter of the affair at Narek, to which allusion is made in my despatch No. 827 of the 23rd instant. He could tell me that peace was already completely restored, that the people had returned to their homes, and that their houses had been rebuilt at the expense of the Government, in consequence of my representations.

Ferid Pasha added that he had during the past year been untiring in his exertions to secure the suppression of the Armenian revolutionary movement with as little loss of life as possible, and he could flatter himself that, thanks to his efforts, in which he had been greatly assisted by Sir N. O'Conor, who had always kept him fully informed of all the reports that reached him, a catastrophe such as that of 1895 had been averted. He was now convinced, from the information in his possession, that, had he been less energetic, a misfortune similar to that mentioned above would have happened and he was very proud to have prevented it.

His Highness said that the Vali of Bitlis was now visiting the Mush and Talori districts to see that the resettlement work had been properly done, and that the military posts built had been constructed in suitable places, and were manned by well-disciplined troops. He had given orders that any use of force other than the legitimate police and military forces should be severely punished, and he had telegraphed to the Vali to inquire into the distress said to be prevailing, and to furnish relief. He hoped in a few days to have a satisfactory report from him.

I replied that I had reason to believe that His Majesty's Government fully realized the efforts he had made, and I reminded His Highness that Captain Tyrrell had already left Van *en route* for Mush, to inspect the resettlement work. I said that I had heard that a large consignment of grain had been sent to Mush, and expressed a hope that a portion at least of it was intended to relieve the distress.

His Highness answered that the corn was destined in part for the military and in part for the relief of the inhabitants. He was glad to hear that Captain Tyrrell had started, and he hoped that he would lose no time on the way, as the winter promised to be an early one.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 222.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 7.)

(No. 842.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October 31, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van upon the subject of the recent ill-doings of Hussein Pasha, of Patnotz, at Adeljivass, and representing that it would be well if he could be banished from the district.

After consultation with my French colleague, we decided that we would separately bring the matter to the notice of the Ottoman Government, and I accordingly told the Grand Vizier to-day that I had once more received a serious complaint from Captain Tyrrell against Hussein Pasha, who was accused of cruelly persecuting the Armenians resident in the Caza of Adeljivass. Captain Tyrrell, I said, seemed to think that the only remedy for the evil lay in the Pasha's removal from the scene of his misdeeds.

I did not ask for his banishment, because I am aware that many previous representations in that sense have been unavailing. Hussein Pasha, as a Mir Alai of Hamidieh, is beyond the reach of the civil power. He is a strong and rich man, who is powerfully supported at the Palace, so that it seemed to me useless to press the Grand Vizier to do what it is most improbable that he would be able to carry out.

Ferid Pasha said that the French Chargé d'Affaires had already spoken to him about the excesses committed by Hussein Pasha. He would telegraph for particulars to the Vali of Van, and would take such repressive measures as he could, but I must remember that the Armenian revolutionaries were still active; only the other day another band over 100 strong had been driven back across the frontier.

I said that His Majesty's Government would not complain of the legitimate dispersal of revolutionary bands by properly-constituted troops, but that it was my duty to protest in their name against lawless excesses committed at the expense of peaceful Armenians by Kurds under a man like Hussein Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 222.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 46.)
Sir, *Van, October 3, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency of the state of the Caza of Adeljivass, for which the notorious Hussein Pasha, of Patnotz, a Mir Alai of Hamidieh, is responsible. This man is very rich and powerful, and for long has been in all but name Governor of the Adeljivass Caza. I reported on the condition there in my No. 43 of the 24th December, 1903. Hussein Pasha is apparently gradually driving the Armenians out of the district and replacing them by his Kurds. Such is the effect of his domination, and such are the intentions ascribed to him by the Vali.

Last May I received the inclosed statement which shows the progress of this work.* It is possibly exaggerated, and the details may not be altogether accurate, and I had intended to ask permission from your Excellency to visit the Haideranli region, north of the lake, to see what the facts were, and how far Hussein Pasha had gone in oppressing and expelling the Armenian population.

But my journey to Sassun and stay in Mush interfered with this project. Lately his tyranny seems to have exceeded all bounds, and the state of the Armenians in that district has become apparently so desperate, while there has been a series of recent murders by Hussein Pasha's men, that I have decided to draw your Excellency's attention to this matter at once. The more so, as at this moment, for the first time for many years, the Vali and the local government seem disposed to act against Hussein Pasha as far as they can.

A few months ago an Albanian, called Mehmet Effendi, became Acting Kaimakam at Adeljivass. He is a pretty good man, and did well when acting in the same

* Not sent.

capacity at Julamerk two years ago. He soon fell foul of Hussein Pasha, and the latter, finding that he had to do with a man who was not afraid of him, has just come in to Van to request the Vali to remove him, saying that if Mehmet Effendi remains at Adeljivass he himself will not return thither. The Vali says that he replied that in that case he could remain in Van, as he was not going to change his officials at Hussein Pasha's bidding. At any rate the Vali's reception of Hussein Pasha seems to have been a cool one.

Meanwhile, three Armenians, who were supposed to be taking a Petition against Hussein Pasha to the Vali of Bitlis, are reported to have been killed on the road by Hussein Pasha's men. A carriage-smith of Van, well known locally, who had been summoned to Adeljivass by Hussein Pasha on business, a prominent Armenian of Adeljivass called Nasso, and a teacher of the village of Kara Keshish, have all been murdered by Hussein Pasha's men during the last fortnight, and in each case there seems to be circumstantial evidence that these murders were ordered by Hussein Pasha himself. Complaints have been made, and it is desired to bring Hussein Pasha to trial for complicity in the murders. But the Vali says that it would not be the slightest use, and that the Courts cannot condemn Hussein Pasha, and at any rate could not punish him, he being a Mir Alai of the Hamidieh, and high in favour with the Mushir.

The Vali, however, in telling me that he could do practically nothing himself, said that he was tired of the state of things in Adeljivass, and that he would like to see Hussein Pasha banished, and asked if I thought that this end could be attained by reporting these things to your Excellency.

He said the same thing, I understand, to the French Consul, and the latter tells me that he is writing to the French Ambassador to beg that action may be taken in Constantinople with a view to the removal of Hussein Pasha.

This man's banishment would at least be an earnest of the desire of the Imperial Government to ameliorate the lot of the Armenians in those cases where they are being treated with flagrant injustice, and would show the revolutionists and the Armenians that there was some hope where they can at present see none.

The breaking of Hussein Pasha's power, and the prevention of the tyranny exercised by his Kurds in the regions north of the lake are greatly to be desired, and could hardly fail to have a very good effect here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. G. TYRRELL.

No. 223.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 7.)

(No. 845.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, October 29, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a most interesting and carefully compiled report upon the condition of affairs in his district, and the nature of the remedial measures that he considers desirable, which has been furnished to me by His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

The report has been drawn up by Captain Tyrrell at the request of Sir N. O'Conor, and is a valuable document which may be of some practical use at a future date. It shows that the writer is alive to the present state of things in the Armenian districts which he has lately visited, as well as of those within his own residential area.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 223.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 44.)
Sir, *Van, September 28, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's of the 30th August.

In considering simple and practical remedial measures, one naturally thinks first

of the most crying evils, and of the circumstances one would most like to see changed.

I will submit some of the reasons for the present state of unrest and dissatisfaction, and why many Armenians consider anything better than a continuance of the present régime, and will suggest the means by which an improvement might be effected.

Firstly.—The miserable state of the Armenian villages is due to oppressive and unreasonable taxation, partly arising from the fact that Kurds do not bear their fair share of it, and consequently the burden falls chiefly upon the Armenians.

This is not always the fault of the local authorities. A new tax may be imposed from Constantinople when money is needed. This impost may be quite unsuitable to local conditions, it may tell with particular severity on a portion of the people which is already taxed as much as it can bear, it may be the last straw driving the people to leave the country, or to join the revolutionists, and the Local Government may recognize all this. But there is no help for it. The local authorities have no say in the matter, and must obey the orders as to the collection of the particular tax.

A worse feature is that the Local Government is sometimes called upon urgently for sums of money, which it must raise somehow. The demands from Constantinople are imperative, and money must be found.

These circumstances point to a simple alteration in the methods of the Central Government, viz., a consideration of its financial needs during the coming year, and an equitable allotment of the provision of those needs according to the capacities of the different parts of the Empire. This would also enable the taxes to be collected at the proper time, which is a most important point where the population is mainly agricultural, as is the case here. A sudden demand for money, which has to be provided at once, may dislocate all the financial arrangements of the vilayet. The villagers have to find money before the harvest, *i.e.*, before they are able to sell the produce of their land. They have no money, and raise it by mortgaging the coming crops at a fraction of their value. This is very hard on them, and could easily be obviated by a little forethought and arrangement.

The Central Government should also modify its attitude of favouritism towards the Kurds. The local authorities should be encouraged to punish Kurds for crimes committed by them, and to treat those of them who do not pay their taxes as defaulting Armenians are treated.

Secondly.—In addition to unfair taxation, the villagers have to provide money which goes into the pockets of officials, of tax collectors, of tax farmers, and into all sorts of other places where it shouldn't.

The only remedy for this is to improve the officials and their administrative methods out of all recognition, or to have them under such supervision that they would know that dismissal from their posts would assuredly follow on peculation, bribe-taking, and other misdeeds.

There is nothing new, and, I fear, nothing very practical, in all this, but it seems to me that minor reforms, however good in their way, are simply at the mercy of demands for money from Constantinople, and of the attitude towards them of the more important officials, and unless some check can be placed on these, the chances of such reforms proving really useful are small.

Thirdly.—The method of collecting the taxes is bad, and leads to unnecessary hardship. For this local officials are primarily responsible, and here again, as long as the Kaimakam, or whoever may be the chief official in the district, is a bad man, or a weak one, not much can be done. But as the gendarmerie are largely employed in this work, and as a zaptieh, being generally a Mussulman, armed, and a Government servant, has a power over the Christian villagers quite disproportionate to his official status, this evil could be to a great extent remedied by having the gendarmerie under better supervision and control. I have known cases where a zaptieh, to oblige a Mussulman friend, will go and forcibly collect the latter's debts from a Christian village without any authorization whatever. This should be quite impossible, and would be, if the officers of the gendarmerie did their duty in keeping their men in order, and still more so if the Kaimakams, &c., considered the interests of the people under their care.

Fourthly.—Much of the hardships of the Armenians here is due to the lawlessness of the Hamidieh, who are to a great extent beyond the power even of the Vali.

I believe it is the terrorism of the Hamidieh which makes revolutionists, even more than the bad Government. I think it ought to be possible to abolish the Hamidieh altogether. Its value as a fighting force is very small, and certainly not equal to the money which selected brigands draw as salaries for being officers therein.

If the Hamidieh again became ordinary Kurds, and could no longer look to the powerful protection of the Mushir at Erzinjan, the boon to the country would be immense. If the abolition of the Hamidieh be too much to demand, its constitution might be very advantageously modified as follows: Kurdish officers to receive pay only when called out for training; men and Kurdish officers to be amenable to the ordinary civil jurisdiction, and to be treated as civilians, except when actually called out or under arms; the arms to be kept in store, and only issued for periods of training or when the force is called out.

Fifthly.—The general state of insecurity for life and property, especially where Christians are concerned. This points to an adequate policing of the country. At present the gendarmerie are quite inadequate to this work (even if they were not largely employed in collecting taxes), much of which falls upon the regular soldiers, to the detriment of the people and that of their own special work. To increase the numbers of the gendarmerie would not be sufficient. It would have to be disciplined and under control, as pointed out above. A strong and efficient gendarmerie under officers who could be trusted would keep order among the Kurds, would make the incursions of armed bands of revolutionists very difficult (and so do away with the ostensible *raison d'être* of the Hamidieh), would protect Christian villages, would release many scattered detachments of soldiers (these detachments being, according to Turkish officers, a principal cause of the lack of discipline and training which exists among the troops), and would have a great effect on the general state of security, and therefore the prosperity, of the country. It should be possible to have such a force, but it would probably have to be under effective foreign control. The men should be liable to prompt punishment for misdeeds, and to dismissal if unsuitable, to prevent them from tyrannizing over the population, and, above all, they should receive their salaries regularly to prevent them from living on the people.

Sixthly.—Armenians are gradually being ousted from their villages, and their lands are falling into the hands of Kurds.

The revolutionists lay great stress on this point, and it is one keenly felt by all Armenians. It depends largely on my first proposition, being due to the fact that the Armenians are becoming poorer, and find it impossible to meet the calls for taxation, while the Kurds are, comparatively speaking, immune from those calls. Thus it is that Kurds come into possession of fields which the owners have been obliged to mortgage, and so get a footing in the villages. I have on former occasions drawn attention to the deplorable consequences which generally follow this step. Unfortunately Kurds are encouraged, rather than otherwise, to follow this course.

Orders should be given that, in future, under no circumstances will a Kurd be allowed to settle or to acquire property in a Christian village, and that, if he wishes to leave his own village, he must go to some other Kurdish or Mussulman village. In cases where there are a few Kurdish houses in a Christian village, the tendency is always for these Kurds to import friends and relations, who also get possession of the property of the Christian inhabitants. This importation of Kurds from outside by those who are already settled in the village should also be stopped. This, then, is the summary of the remedial measures which I have submitted to your Excellency:—

1. The Local Governments should know roughly the amount of money required from them for the year, and their arrangements should not be upset by sudden demands from Constantinople. The incidence of taxation should be left more to the local authorities, who should be encouraged to make the Kurds contribute their share.

2. The abolition of the Hamidieh or alteration of its constitution on the lines suggested.

3. The reorganization of the gendarmerie under European control, with a large increase in its numbers.

4. The settlement of Kurds in Christian villages to be forbidden.

If any one or more of the above could be carried out, an improvement in those directions might be expected; but, as I have endeavoured to explain, they largely depend upon one another and upon the attitude of the more important officials.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. G. TYRRELL, *Captain,*
His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

No. 224.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 854.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 8, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 825 of the 22nd ultimo, respecting the relief of distress in the Sassun districts, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Memorandum by the Acting First Dragoman, showing the result of further representations which I made on receipt of a telegram from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, to the effect that the instructions promised me by the Grand Vizier had not been sent.

The relief which Captain Tyrrell is authorized to distribute refers to a sum of 120*l.* subscribed by Armenians in Abyssinia and transmitted to me by Sir J. Harrington.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 224.

Memorandum by Mr. Mariniitsch.

IN answer to two telegrams sent by the Vali of Bitlis to the Grand Vizier on the 17th and 22nd October last, asking for instructions, his Highness telegraphed to him last Saturday stating that he should instruct the Mutessarifs of Mush and Guentz to inquire into at once and report upon the exact number of persons who should receive relief in the distressed districts.

Ferid Pasha added in his telegram that the British Consul (Captain Tyrrell) is authorized to distribute relief, and may also be accompanied by a Turkish official in order that his task should not be interfered with. But with a view to avoiding confusion or difficulties amongst the population, and especially to facilitate the action of the Turkish authorities, the Grand Vizier has at the same time instructed the Vali to select one or two places as special centres for distribution of relief to the destitute.

Constantinople, November 7, 1904.

No. 225.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 855.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 8, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 841 of the 31st ultimo, respecting the excesses committed against Armenians at Narek, I have the honour to transmit copies of despatches which I have received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van giving accounts of the affair.

The Grand Vizier has renewed his assurances that a most searching inquiry will be instituted to ascertain who are the officials responsible for the outrage, and has promised that the guilty parties shall be punished suitably. I have again to-day sent a message to his Highness reminding him of these promises, and informing him that the reports I have now received show that Lutfi Bey, Halil Effendi, and Ghafur, the outlaw, are deserving of condign punishment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 225.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 49.)
Sir, *Van, October 17, 1904.*

IN confirmation of my telegram of to-day's date I have the honour to report that the large Armenian village of Narek, in Kiavash, to the south of the lake, was destroyed by Kurds on the 10th instant. I heard of it on the 11th, and saw the Vali that day. He told me that he had received a telegram on the night of the 9th from Lutfi Bey, the Kaïmakam of Kiavash, saying that revolutionists were in the village, and that they were surrounded by soldiers. The Vali did not attribute much importance to it, having every confidence in Lutfi Bey, who has always been regarded as an exceptionally good Kaïmakam.

On the 10th it was rumoured that the village had been burned, though Lutfi Bey telegraphed to the Vali that nothing had happened.

On the 11th the Vali sent out Husni Bey, Tabur Agbassi of gendarmerie, to inquire and report; and he asked me, and also Dr. Ussher, of the American Mission, to go out and make an independent inquiry.

As a result of these investigations the Kaïmakam has been called in to Van, and will probably be brought to trial, while Husni Bey remains in Vostan as Kaïmakam Vekile, to resettle the inhabitants and rebuild the village.

I will now give you what my investigations lead me to believe were the facts.

A band of eighteen revolutionists, evidently from Gargar, had descended into Narek and collected corn and forage from the village. This became known in Vostan on the 9th instant, and soldiers and zaptiehs were sent up to surround the village.

A little desultory fighting took place that evening on the usual lines, *i.e.*, the revolutionists broke through the cordon and escaped, without loss, and without any serious effort being made to stop them. One zaptieh (a Kurd, named Abdul Hamid) was killed and one wounded.

A few zaptiehs, under a Mulazim, Mahmud Agha, were ordered to remain in the village, ostensibly for the protection of the inhabitants; but the bulk of these had already become panic-struck, and were leaving.

That night the Kurds came down and began to plunder, meeting with no opposition from the zaptiehs, and on the following day the village was burnt, and certain Kurds and zaptiehs seemed to have scoured the environs, shooting any Armenian they saw. Halil Effendi, Yuzbashi of gendarmerie, encouraged them in this, and several eye-witnesses agree that he actually handed Martinis and cartridges to certain Kurds, telling them to go and kill. Straw and oil were also supplied to them, with which to set fire to the houses.

Twenty-one corpses have been found, some of which showed signs of torture; and there is little doubt but that these do not represent the total number killed. For instance, twelve Armenians are said to have taken refuge in the neighbouring Kurdish village of Haji Zeva. They have all disappeared, but only six bodies, which were thrown into the river, evidently with the hope that they might be carried away, have been found.

The principal murderer was a man called Abdul Ghafur, brother of the zaptieh Abdul Hamid who had been killed by the revolutionists. It was this man who went to Haji Zeva and had the Armenians there butchered, and he also shot five or six of the others. This Abdul Ghafur is nominally an outlaw, condemned to 101 years' imprisonment. Both he and the late Abdul Hamid were well-known tyrants, and during the past two years I have frequently had occasion to speak to the Vali about them. But nothing effectual was done; Abdul Ghafur was allowed complete liberty, and now, after having murdered several Armenians, under the eyes of zaptiehs and officials, in revenge for his brother's death, he has again been allowed to escape.

Apparently no women were killed, but there was one among the wounded. Children are reported to have been burned in the houses, but their remains had not yet been recovered from the ruins.

About fifty buildings were burnt, including a large monastery. Everything was looted, and absolutely nothing was left except some stacks of grass and straw which had not been burnt. Many buffaloes and cattle perished in the burning houses.

About 100 of the people fled to Mukus, and the rest to various villages in the vicinity.

Kuli Khan Bey, an influential local Kurd, received a good many, and gave them shelter and protection; and he is now in Narek to protect the villagers who have returned.

When I left Narek on Saturday, the 15th, most of the people were back; orders had been received by Husni Bey, from the Vali, to distribute 300 chaps (about 675 bushels) of wheat from the Government Anbar, to give as much chopped straw as was needed for the animals, and to cut trees and rebuild the houses. Also about 200 cattle had been recovered, and 55 sheep (out of 400).

A good deal of the plunder had also been found by the zaptiehs, and was being collected with a view to immediate restoration in the various villages to which it had been conveyed.

Husni Bey is confident that he will recover practically everything that was taken; and orders have been given that Abdul Ghafur is to be taken, dead or alive.

Meanwhile Lutfi Bey, the Kaïmakam, has been called in to Van, and Halil Effendi has been relieved of his post of Commandant of the gendarmerie in Vostan, and is to be tried by court-martial.

Taking the most lenient view, Lutfi Bey is very much to blame for having been so weak and negligent as to allow this occurrence to take place. He never went out there at all till Tuesday, the 11th, the day after the destruction of the village, and then he only went half-way, and contented himself with receiving a report from Halil Effendi that it was "all right." He did not actually visit Narek till Wednesday, the 12th, after Dr. Ussher had arrived there.

But I am inclined to attribute more than mere negligence to Lutfi Bey. Halil Effendi was, perhaps, the actual malefactor, but he would not have dared to act as he did without at least tacit encouragement from the Kaïmakam, and there is proof that Lutfi Bey himself sent Kurds out there from Vostan on the Sunday and Monday, and that he and Halil Effendi were in perfect sympathy. Also oil was openly sent out from Vostan to facilitate the burning of the village, and this could not have been done without the knowledge of the Kaïmakam. It is also largely owing to Lutfi Bey's protection that Abdul Ghafur has never been put in prison.

Now Lutfi Bey is trying to shield both himself and Halil Effendi by putting the blame on the Mulazim, Mahmud Agha, saying that he allowed the Kurds to come into the village. The Mulazim, however, merely acted on Halil's orders. I talked separately to both Lutfi Bey and Halil Effendi while I was out there. Their statements did not coincide, and they both told me obvious lies, and contradicted themselves.

Every one out there, and the Vali here, are agreed that the affair could not possibly have happened if Lutfi Bey had meant that it should not, and in any case he could have nipped it in the bud if he had wished to. As it was, the Kurds were doing what they liked from Sunday night till Husni Bey's arrival in Vostan on Tuesday evening.

About forty Kurds have been imprisoned in Vostan by Husni Bey for implication in this affair, and it is to be hoped that they will not be allowed to escape adequate punishment by the leniency of the Courts before which they will be tried. But it is always difficult to get Armenians to come and witness boldly against a Mussulman, and, generally, bad for the Armenian.

However, these Kurds are, after all, minor offenders. The three principals are the Kaïmakam, Lutfi Bey, the Yuzboshi of Gendarmerie, Halil Effendi, and the outlaw, Abdul Ghafur. The latter enjoyed the friendship and protection of the two former. From what I heard in Vostan and Narek, I am pretty sure that Halil Effendi knows where Abdul Ghafur is to be found.

I do not think the Vali is in any way to blame for this affair. He appears to take an uncompromising view of the behaviour of the three I have mentioned above, and, as I believe, the orders of the Grand Vizier are that Kurds shall not be allowed to interfere in these cases, nor to murder Armenians and plunder villages, the French Consul and I are hopeful that pressure will, if necessary, be brought to bear to secure the adequate punishment of those concerned in this affair.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 225.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Mr. Townley.

(No. 51.)
Sir,

Van, October 20, 1904.

WITH reference to the affair at Narek, reported in my No. 49 of the 17th October, I have the honour to state that the Vali told me to-day that he had decided to transfer the offending Kaïmakam Lutfi Bey to the Caza of Hamidieh (Khoshab). He said that his determination to bring Lutfi Bey to trial was in no way relaxed, but that until the minor offenders had been examined, and their evidence taken before the Courts, there was nothing to implicate Lutfi Bey; and that if any incriminating evidence was produced, Lutfi Bey would be tried, even though, in the meanwhile, he had been acting as Kaïmakam in another place.

I explained to the Vali that the first necessity now was to reassure the Armenians, not merely in Narek, but all through the country, as to the attitude of the Government towards them; that the people of Narek were not settling down as quickly as they might because of their doubts on this point, and that if they saw that the Kaïmakam, to whom they attributed the responsibility for the disaster which had befallen them, was, after having been called into Van, merely transferred, after a few days, to another post, they could not regard the Government as sincere in its promises to protect them and to prevent similar occurrences by making an example of the offenders. I told him that his contemplated action would have a very bad effect, not merely on all the Armenians, but on the Consuls (to whom he had promised that he would leave no stone unturned to punish those who were culpable), and on the community in general.

He agreed with what I said, and promised to keep Lutfi Bey in Van, in disgrace, for some time longer, until, at least, the people of Narek were settled again; though he retained his intention of sending him to Khoshab eventually, until the time for his trial should arrive.

I fear all this means that the question of Lutfi Bey's complicity in the Narek affair will be shelved if possible, or allowed to lapse; and then Halil Effendi and others will also avoid punishment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

No. 226.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 859.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, November 8, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 842 of the 31st ultimo respecting Hussein Pasha and the state of the Caza of Adeljivass, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, stating that that official has left Van to return to Adeljivass, and transmitting a statement of the recent events in that locality by the acting Murakhas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 226.

Vice-Consul Tyrrell to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 48.)
Sir,

Van, October 11, 1904.

WITH reference to my No. 46 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to inform you that Hussein Pasha has left Van to return to Adeljivass. So far as I know, the Vali has not acceded to his request to dismiss the present acting Kaïmakam. But neither has he paid any attention, apparently, to the complaints against Hussein Pasha which have been submitted to him; and there are now in Van about twenty Armenians from the villages of Arun and Arjira, who had come here from Adeljivass to lay their case

before the Vali, and who dare not return until something is done to protect them from Hussein Pasha's vengeance.

Annexed is a statement of the recent events mentioned in No. 40, communicated by the acting Murakhas of Adeljivass, with a translation. Though I do not vouch for the truth of all that this statement contains (not having had an opportunity of seeing these things myself), yet I think it gives a fair idea of the state to which Hussein Pasha has been allowed to bring the Caza of Adeljivass. And this is not a complaint against the Government, nor compiled by revolutionists with a view to mislead, and I think the main facts may be taken as the truth.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. TYRRELL, *Captain.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 226.

Letter from the Armenian Murakhas of Adeljivass, respecting the state of suffering of Armenians in the Caza of Adeljivass.

(Translation.)

I REPORT and explain to you the state of suffering of the oppressed Armenians in the Caza of Adeljivass, from the severity of trials and tribulations at the hands of the Kurds, and especially the matter of the murders which have taken place in these days. In this Caza, Hussein Pasha, Chief of the Haideranli Ashiret and a Mir Alai of Hamidieh, who, ever since the year of the famous massacres, has seized, and taken possession of, the goods and revenues, the property and fields of the Armenians, was last year appointed to the post of acting Kaimakam of the Caza of Adeljivass. Having remained in this position for about seven months, and not having performed his duties well, he was dismissed and another man was appointed in his place. Immediately on hearing of this the afore-mentioned Hussein Pasha, being furiously angry, and attributing his dismissal to Armenians, therefore resolved on exterminating and taking the lives of Armenians, and has incited the men of his tribe to kill the Armenians whom they meet on the roads and in the fields. And within the last forty days it has become manifest that he has caused the death of fifteen Armenians, murdered. And seeing that the Armenians here are harmless and quiet agriculturists, and faithful subjects of the Imperial Government, and have never done any harm to the country or people, and, God forbid, the name of "fedai" has up till now not been heard here, yet only for the reason stated above, *i.e.*, his dismissal from the Acting Governorship, he, contrary to the Osmanli laws and justice, is tyrannically causing hurt to innocent Armenians. The above Hussein Pasha, while he was Kaimakam Vekile, farmed the entire taxes of the Caza of Adeljivass, and, having appointed four or five Kurds, from his servants, as officials and guardians over the threshing-floors in every village, gave orders to his servants for the taking of one-fourth as tithe in a manner contrary to the law, and, as if he had firmly resolved on killing all those who objected to this order.

On the 15th August, the people of the village of Arun disputed the matter of this tithe, and wished to refer to the Vilayet and to pay the tithe on the scale laid down by law like last year. Kurds named Fethulla, son of Abdal Agha, and Hassan, son of Moussa Topus, of the Pasha's servants, who had been made officials for this village, in accordance with the Pasha's instructions intercepted on the road the Armenians who were going to refer to the Vilayet, and shot three of them. Again, on the 20th August, three corpses were seen, with their throats cut, in the rocks close to Peshnekyumur, and were recognised as Armenians because they were not circumcised, but immediately afterwards the corpses were made away with. On the 5th of the current month of September, in the lands of Aghbulukh, in the Suti Yaila, a Vauli, Alexander, the smith and his companions, Nasso, of the village of Arjira, and Panus, of the village of Kara Keshish, have been cut to pieces with daggers (the murdered Alexander, having come here to request payment for a carriage he had made for Hussein Pasha, was killed on the road while going from the said Hussein Pasha's tents in the afore-mentioned Yaila to Adeljivass). The cousin of the above-mentioned Panus also went to Hussein Pasha's tents merely to inquire for these men and was killed in front of his tent, and his body was made away with. Again, on the 15th September, in the lands of Sipan Village, three Armenians, and in the neighbourhood of Aiger Gyöl, two Armenians were murdered, and their bodies made away with. Hussein Pasha's servants, Kiamil, son of Abdulla, Hassan, son of Moussa Topus, and Fethulla, son of Abdal Agha, and a

Cahveji, called Ajam, have been appointed to the special business of murdering and killing Armenians, travellers and agriculturists, whom they meet in the fields as if they were hunting hares. The said wicked Hassan, too, is always to be found in a house in Adeljivass, and freely going to and fro, while the Government refrains from action against him.

When the Kurds take up their winter quarters in Armenian villages, they try to make them quit their houses by promises, having come with the intention of killing the Armenians by stealth. So much so that I am within the Cassaba, and I know that they are resolved to take my life, and since, some days I am under the protection of soldiers. Besides this, they have formed the intention in their hearts of killing some ten or twenty Armenians, both of the Cassaba and of the villages. Besides this, the Armenians, by reason of the impossibility of the farmer going to his fields, or the traveller on his road, perforce cannot stir out of their houses, and are prevented from gaining their subsistence. They interfere excessively with our worship and religion. In the villages on festivals and holy days the Kurds come into the churches, and are bold enough to mock our worship. In short, the Kurds, being entirely uncontrolled, neither obeying the Government nor the soldiers, are wandering freely and without fear in the bazaars and populous places, with rifles, cartridges, and daggers. A few days ago Hussein Pasha, with the object of beating a military Lieutenant in the bazaar, was even bold enough to make an attack upon the soldiers. This nearly caused a panic among the people. Hussein Pasha, treating the Government here as his toy and plaything, does exactly what he likes. Now, with the intention of having all the zaptiehs recruited from Kurds, he has taken twenty of his servants with him to Van, and has gone to the Centre of Government to have these soldiers removed from here. God forbid that the soldiers be removed from here; he will destroy the whole country according to his will. Hussein Pasha pulled down the ruined church of the village of Lower Sipan, and carried more than 2,000 cut stones to the village of Kojeri, as many as were necessary to make himself a house and rooms. This year, too, he secretly took the stones from the church of Adeljivass, and used them for a building he was making in the Cassaba. Again, he has seized more than 100 animals belonging to Turks—bullocks, cows, and asses, with their loads—and as he has destroyed the tranquillity, quiet, and safety of the country, the helpless Armenians, not being able to support existence, nor to remain settled, are desirous of migrating, but it is impossible for them to go in safety. Moreover, for the safety and tranquillity of these helpless Armenians, I beg you not to withhold your kindness and favour, &c.

(Signed) MAKAR, *Rahib,*
Adeljivass Caza, Murakhas Vekile.

September 21, 1904.

No. 227.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 860.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November* 8, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of two despatches from His Majesty's Acting Consul and Consul respectively at Jeddah, reporting the occurrence of a raid on the Medina road, near Jeddah, and the dispatch of a punitive expedition for the chastisement of the guilty parties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 227.

Acting Consul Sheikh Muhammad Hussain to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 91.)

Sir, *Jeddah, October* 15, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to report that, on the night of the 12th instant, a caravan of thirty men of this town, while coming from Medina, were attacked by the Bedouins of the Aboubbad tribe, about 8 miles to the north-west of Jeddah. Nine men of the

caravan were shot dead, seven of whom were the Hadrami traders of this town, and the remaining two were the Bedouins of the Saluf and Bishir tribes, who were taken by the travellers as companions for the safety of the caravan. The leader of the caravan, named Hibshi, and six others have been wounded.

As a large number of the people of Jeddah and Mecca go on a pilgrimage to Medina every year in the month of Rajeb, and return in the beginning of Shaban, three or four other caravans were following the caravan that was attacked, and great anxiety was felt for their safety also. To prevent another catastrophe, the people of this town, on the receipt of the news of the raid, at once sent several special messengers to inform the following caravans of the danger, and make them unite and make a big caravan before proceeding to the place of the raid. This precaution proved successful, and all the caravans arrived this morning without any mishap.

It is reported that the Grand Sharif has collected a levy of about 5,000 Bedouins of the Oteiba, Hodel, Koresh, and Abadla tribes at Mecca, and is about to send them to punish the turbulent tribes, and it is also reported that Hamarin, Bishir, Moabbad, and some other sections of the Harb tribe have particularly been marked out for the object of this punitive expedition.

But as the result of this punitive expedition will be wholesale raiding and destruction of the property of the tribes against whom it is being sent, I am afraid the consequence will be still more disastrous, as the offended tribes are sure to hanker for reprisals, and raids with greater frequency and severity on the pilgrim caravans which will very shortly be passing on the Jeddah–Mecca and the Mecca–Medina roads shall be the immediate outcome, with severer intertribal fightings at the time of Haj, possibly at Arafat, Mina, and Mecca.

I have been informed that a fortnight ago the tribes against whom the expedition is being sent applied to the Vali and informed him that they were quite discontented with the treatment they were receiving from the Grand Sharif and his Kaimakams, that they were being plundered by the Kaimakams of the Grand Sharif, their men were being imprisoned for the sake of extortion, their allowances of grain appointed by the Government were misappropriated, the intertribal excesses were allowed to pass unnoticed and unpunished by the Sharifian authorities, and that their grievances were not attended to and redressed, and therefore they were obliged to apply to his Excellency as the highest Representative of the Government in Hejaz, and that if their grievances will receive due consideration at the hand of the authorities, and will be redressed, there shall be no more troubles on the roads, as these disturbances were as a protest to draw the attention of the authorities.

As far as I know no notice has been taken of this application, and the Grand Sharif has been allowed to carry on the preparations for the above-mentioned expedition, which is now ready to start from Mecca in a day or two.

A few days ago it was rumoured here that a new Commander-in-chief was appointed for Hejaz, and the nominee was one General Shawki Pasha, but it was given out yesterday that, on the protest of his Excellency Ahmad Ratib Pasha, the order has been cancelled, and that the Vali has given assurances of keeping the roads in Hejaz in a condition of safety during the ensuing pilgrimage.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MUHAMMAD HUSSAIN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 227.

Consul Devey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 94.)
Sir, *Jeddah, October* 23, 1904.

HAVING returned here this week, I have the honour to report that I exchanged friendly visits with his Excellency Ahmed Ratib Pasha, who will soon be leaving Jeddah for Mecca to reside there during the month of Ramazan.

With reference to the subject of Acting Consul Hussain's despatch No. 91 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to report that the punitive tribal expedition, now divided into four columns, had reached Hadda on the 17th instant, but do not appear to have come into violent collision with their foes yet; of the latter, those who are not ill-disposed towards the Sharif were invited to withdraw to the south of the country between Mecca and Jeddah, and presumably time is being allowed for any who wish to retire.

The numbers of the levy are stated to be about 3,000 at least, and to consist of Oteiba and smaller contingents of the other tribes; they will for the present deal with the Moabbad and Bishir tribes only. I should mention that the townspeople continue to show some real alarm lest serious fighting should take place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

P.S.—I have just learned that thirty camels of the Moabbad have been seized, and that it is rumoured they are inclined to ask for terms.

Both the Vali and the Jeddah Kaimakam appear to disown all responsibility for the Sharif's action in this matter, and Ali Yumni Effendi has even hinted his distinct disapproval.

G. P. D.

No. 228.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 391.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 14, 1904.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 827 of the 23rd ultimo, reporting your conversation with the Grand Vizier on the subject of the destruction of the Village of Narek by Kurds.

I approve the language which you held to his Highness on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 229.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 392.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 14, 1904.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 842 of the 31st ultimo respecting the misdeeds of Hussein Pasha in the Caza of Adeljivoros.

I approve the language which you held to the Grand Vizier on this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 230.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 871. Secret.) *Constantinople, November* 15, 1904.

[REFERENCE Constantinople No. 837 of 28th October. Petroleum Concessions in Mesopotamia. Map of, transmits.]

No. 231.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 872.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November* 15, 1904.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 855 of the 8th instant, respecting the excesses committed against Armenians at Narek, I have the honour to state that the Grand Vizier, after my representations, caused a telegram to be sent to the Vali of Van, asking him to report at once whether the village had been rebuilt, and whether steps had been taken to bring to justice the persons implicated, especially those mentioned by me by name.

His Highness received, on the 7th instant, an answer from the Vali to the following effect:—

Halil Effendi, Mahmoud Agha, Khalid Tchaouch, and about twenty other persons implicated in the Narek outrage have been already arrested and imprisoned; Abdul Ghafur and his four companions have fled; the plundered property has since been discovered and restored, and those persons whose property had disappeared have been indemnified. In consequence of the constant rains only fifteen houses have been rebuilt out of the public relief money up to the present. The monastery and barns cannot be rebuilt till spring. Provision has been made for feeding the cattle.

I would suggest that punitive measures against Lutfi Bey, whose name I had also mentioned to the Grand Vizier, be not pressed at the present moment, as he has up to now shown himself a thoroughly satisfactory official.

A suggestion might be conveyed to the Grand Vizier that he would be likely to do better in some post where he would not be brought in contact with Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 232.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 31.)

(No. 874.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 15, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 846 of the 1st instant, relative to the newly-formed Financial Commission, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of two despatches, from His Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum and Acting Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting certain measures which have been already set on foot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 232.

Acting Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 59.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, October 27, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, according to the latest order from Constantinople, the weekly takings of the vilayet are to be reported to head-quarters, and not one para is to be spent without previous sanction.

This may be meant as a check on extravagance, but I fear it is still more likely to be a sign that the vilayet is to be bled still further. As it is "impossible" to cut down military expenses, the money so sent to Constantinople will come from the salaries chiefly of the gendarmerie and police. Even at present the vilayet incurs a yearly debt of 35,000*l.*, and it was only yesterday that the Vali had to advance 250*l.* out of his own pocket to meet pressing expenses in the Bayazid district.

In my General Report of the 1st July, I mentioned Nazim Bey's attempts at financial reform. These will all be rendered futile if the Porte is allowed to carry out its newest ideas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 232.

Acting Vice-Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Kharput, November 1, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the dismissal of Hazib Bey, the Defterdar of this vilayet, in consequence of his failure to carry out an order for immediate remittance to Constantinople of £T. 15,000. On Hazib Bey's reporting the impossibility of raising so large a sum, a telegram was at once dispatched from the Ministry of Finance relieving him of his duties.

At the same time instructions have been received to suspend payment of all salaries to officials and pensions to exiles pending further orders.

The strictest economy is enjoined, and special sanction is required from Constantinople for all expenditure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

No. 233.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 875.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 15, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, forwarding a report on the administrative condition of the Vilayet of Beirout and the Mutessariflik of the Lebanon, which is somewhat more favourable than those recently received from other parts of the Ottoman Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 233.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Mr. Townley.

(No. 73.)
Sir, *Beirout, November 3, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith my report on the administrative condition of the Vilayet of Beirout and the Mutessariflik of the Lebanon for the quarter ended the 30th September, 1904.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 233.

Report by Consul-General Drummond Hay on the Administrative condition of the Vilayet of Beirout and the Mutessariflik of the Lebanon, October 1904.

THE administration of the Vilayet of Beyrout, under Khalil Pasha, is making satisfactory progress. Public order has been restored and the summary arrest and punishment of disturbers of the peace has inspired confidence among the inhabitants, while those bad characters who had profited by the lawless state of the town under previous Governors have been thoroughly checked.

Khalil Pasha has also given proof of integrity and impartiality in the discharge of his duties. As an example of his honesty, the following instance may be cited:—

The "Zakhira Hajazieh" amounting to 100,000,000 okes of wheat, and 500,000 okes of barley, which is annually sent by the Beirout Vilayet to the Hejaz, has hitherto cost from £T. 20,000 to £T. 30,000. Last year the charges were reduced by about £T. 900, and this year by about £T. 4,300.

The Vali is assisted, as mentioned in my last quarterly report, by a most able Mudir of police named Kamil Bey.

This officer continues to display great zeal in maintaining order. His successes in following up and arresting criminals has created a very salutary impression among the evilly disposed classes of the population.

Municipal affairs continue in the same unsatisfactory condition. A Commission of Notables has been formed, under the Presidency of the Vali, for repairing the streets,

and a loan of 3,000*l.* has been obtained for this purpose from the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

Reshid Pasha, ex-Governor of Presrend, has been appointed Mutessarif of Nablousin in the place of Mahmoud Pasha, dismissed.

There have been several other changes among Kaimakams and Mudirs.

The only public work of importance in the vilayet is the new road from Sidon to Tyre along the sea-coast, a distance of about 40 kilom. Half of this was completed last spring, and the works will be resumed on the remaining section during the winter.

The contraband trade in fire-arms and powder is now on a smaller scale, owing to the activity of the authorities in their measures to suppress it; but the large profits made by the smugglers in those articles encourage them to run almost any risks in carrying on the traffic.

Less vigilance is displayed in the suppression of the Tumbeki contraband, as the authorities insist that the Regie Company are by their Regulations responsible for the control. I understand that the Director of the Company has protested, and appealed to head-quarters on the subject.

There have been no changes of importance in the personnel of the Tribunals. Inadequate remuneration of officials and the consequent irregularities seriously hamper the ends of justice and the general conduct of affairs in this department of the Administration.

The Commercial Court is, however, an exception to the rule under the Presidency of Jelal Bey, who has succeeded by his uprightness and integrity in gaining the respect and confidence of business men throughout the vilayet.

Lebanon.

The agitation in the Lebanon which occurred in the early part of the year has subsided to a great extent during the summer since the transfer of the seat of Government to Beiteddin.

The districts chiefly affected at the time were those of Batroun and Shouf, followed by Kesrawan after the dismissal of the Kaimakam, Sheikh Reshid-el-Khazen, a protégé of the Maronite Patriarch and the French Consulate.

The two Maronite districts are still kept in a state of ferment by the partisans of the ex-Kaimakam and the clergy, who, through their influence, have succeeded in boycotting Sheikh Kassim Daher on his appointment to Kesrawan by preventing a large number of his own subordinates, the clergy, and others from attending to the usual formalities of congratulatory visits, &c., observed on the appointment of a new Kaimakam.

On the other hand, the attitude of the Governor-General allows this state of things to continue unheeded, to the detriment of his own authority in the northern districts.

The tranquillity in the Shouf may be especially attributed to the absence from the mountain of the Emir Mustapha Arslan, who left for Constantinople last spring, after he had succeeded by base and mischievous means in compelling the Governor to appoint his nephew, Emir Lassi, Kaimakam of the Druse district in the place of his rival, Nessib Bey Djumblat, who was forced to resign, as reported in my despatches at that time.

The promotion of Emir Mustapha lately through the influence of Izzet Pasha to the grade of "Bala" has, it is reported, detained him for a while in Constantinople.

It is desirable that his sojourn in the capital be indefinitely prolonged, as his return to the Lebanon will inevitably give rise to fresh troubles.

The tranquillity of the Druses is also guaranteed by the fact that the Governor-General has so far kept his word to maintain the officials in the Administration who belong to the Djumblat party. Nessib Bey has also given a good example by retiring to his country-seat in the Province of Djezzin and abstaining from any interference to the prejudice of the Local Government.

It has hitherto been customary, on the appointment of a new Druse Kaimakam, to dismiss all adherents of the outgoing official.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 234.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 879.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November 15, 1904.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 155 of the 2nd instant, and to my despatch No. 823 of the 25th October, respecting the disturbed state of parts of the Aleppo Vilayet, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, giving particulars of the attack made upon M. Franz Eckart, a gentleman in charge of the German Orphanage at Ourfa.

I mentioned the incident to the Grand Vizier, but did not press the matter, as it was properly one to be dealt with by the German Embassy.

The matter has been energetically taken up by the German Ambassador, who has, I understand, demanded from the Porte that the responsible officer shall be degraded, the soldiers actually guilty of the assault severely punished, and a money indemnity paid to Mr. Eckart.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 234.

Consul Barnham to Mr. Townley.

(No. 48. Confidential.)

Sir, *Aleppo, November 1, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that on the 27th ultimo, Mr. Franz Eckart, the gentleman in charge of the German Orphanage at Ourfa, was the object of a brutal assault by soldiers under circumstances which I beg to bring to your notice, as showing that the troops in that town are not under proper control. I do so with special reference to my report No. 40, Confidential, of the 1st ultimo, in which I pointed out that the Acting Commander Lewa Mehemet Pasha is not a proper person to hold so responsible a post.

On the day in question, Mr. Eckart and his brother were driving out in an open carriage, when a young boy came alongside and made persistent attempts to seize the driver's whistle. Fearing that the boy would be hurt, Mr. Eckart stopped the carriage and tried to warn him off, but as he persisted, Mr. Eckart jumped out and made a feint of running after him. The boy then spat at Mr. Eckart and ran away. As the carriage was returning, and passed close to the barracks, just within the town, it was stopped by a party of soldiers, armed with sticks, who first attacked the driver, and then dragged Mr. Eckart out, beating him so severely that he was taken into hospital with a bad scalp wound, a dislocated shoulder and bad bruises all over the body.

It appears that the boy who had molested them while they were driving out, was the son of the Bimbashi (Major) in command of these men, and as this officer was looking on quietly the whole time they were assaulting Mr. Eckart, there can be little doubt that he had ordered them to stop the carriage and attack him. It was a most wanton outrage, especially as the Bimbashi knew very well who was in the carriage. Mr. Eckart is, I believe, German Consular Agent in Ourfa; but on other grounds his name stands high among both Christians and Moslems. Moreover, both Mr. Eckart and his carriage must have been familiar objects to the soldiers, as they habitually pass the barracks when driving out of town.

The matter has, of course, been reported to the German Consul in Aleppo, who will, no doubt, refer it to his Ambassador.

I have received a message from Mgr. Anania, Armenian Vartabed in Ourfa, who points out that it will be no remedy if the Bimbashi and his men alone are punished for what has taken place, but that Mehemet Pasha, the Acting Commander, should be held responsible for the very bad state of discipline prevailing among the troops generally.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 235.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 884.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 15, 1904.*

A SHORT time back the Grand Vizier told me that he was in possession of absolute proof that the Œcumenical Armenian Bishop of Moush had been directly implicated in the revolutionary proceedings in that district during last summer, that the Prelate had been detained at Trebizond on his way to Constantinople, and that he would be tried there in a Court of Law.

I asked Ferid Pasha yesterday whether the Bishop was still detained at Trebizond, and whether the Turkish Government still proposed to take legal action against him—a proceeding which seemed to me injudicious, and possibly not even in accordance with law. I had already reason to know that it had been decided at the Palace, in consequence of urgent representations made by the Armenian Patriarch, not to try the Bishop, but I was anxious to know what was to be done with him.

The Grand Vizier at once challenged me with being the influence that had secured the Bishop's pardon, and proceeded to confirm the report that had reached me to the effect that the trial would not be gone on with. His Highness added that, of course, it would be impossible to allow him to return to Moush, and that, for the present at least, he would be detained at Trebizond.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 236.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 27.)

(No. 176.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November 27, 1904.*

ARMENIAN distress.

With reference to my despatch No. 897 of the 23rd instant, I have received a telegram from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Mush stating that additional sum of 1,750*l.* is urgently needed for relief. Grand Vizier has again promised to send money, but as his Highness' former assurance was not fulfilled, I now see no objection to accepting offers of assistance from London. I would ask that the money should be sent with as little delay as possible.

It appears that the American Bible House here have no funds available immediately.

No. 237.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 885.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 22, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting the efforts of the Valis of Diarbekir and Mamuret-el-Aziz to improve the condition of their vilayets, and the hostile intrigues of the fanatical element in both places against their Excellencies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 237.

Acting Vice-Consul Young to Mr. Townley.

(No. 25.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, November 8, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report my arrival at Diarbekir from Kharput on the 5th instant.

All was quiet in the Vilayet of Mamuret-el-Aziz up to the date of my departure, and I find the actual state of affairs in the Vilayet of Diarbekir more hopeful than at any period during the last seven months.

Referring to my despatch No. 10 of the 30th July, and having regard particularly to the hostile attitude still maintained by the fanatical Moslem element, both at Kharput and Diarbekir, towards the Valis, I venture once again to call attention to the good work which has been begun by their Excellencies in circumstances of peculiar difficulty.

Hassan Bey was appointed Vali of Mamuret-el-Aziz (Kharput) about twelve months ago. From the date of his arrival it is generally admitted that the administration of his Excellency has been characterized by considerable firmness and absolute impartiality, and favourable comparisons are made by those who are in a position to judge between the peaceful state of affairs which prevails to-day and the insecurity of the last few years. These circumstances, however, have sufficed to create much dissatisfaction among a certain fanatical element in the population, and the disturbances reported in my despatch No. 18 of the 4th August are only one instance of the intrigues by which his Excellency has been harassed from time to time during the last few months.

In Diarbekir the task of Nazim Pasha—who was also appointed last year—has been even more difficult, owing to the very diverse elements in the population and the freedom from all discipline and control hitherto enjoyed by the Hamadieh.

Nevertheless, progress has been made in several respects. At the moment caravan traffic is uninterrupted throughout the vilayet; the principal streets of the city have been improved; a municipal garden has been laid out; and to-day sees the closing of a successful exhibition of local products. His Excellency has also been the means of founding a home for orphans, in which both Christians and Moslems are received and instructed in various useful arts and crafts. It is hoped that purity of the city water-supply has been insured by the careful covering of the aqueducts.

The character and qualifications of both Hassan Bey and Nazim Pasha are, no doubt, well known at Constantinople; and in referring above to some of the satisfactory results recently achieved in both vilayets, in the face of unfavourable criticism and actual hostility, I would venture merely to emphasize the hope, generally entertained by responsible persons here, that the policy hitherto pursued by the Valis of Diarbekir and Mamuret-el-Aziz may not be denied the powerful support which—at least from the local standpoint—it would seem up till now to deserve.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

No. 238.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 886.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 22, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 833 of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting that a reconciliation has taken place between Ibrahim Pasha, Chief of the Milli, and Khalil Bey, Chief of the Karaketchi tribes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 238.

Acting Vice-Consul Young to Mr. Townley.

(No. 26.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, November 8, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that a reconciliation has taken place between Ibrahim Pasha, Chief of the Milli, and Khalil Bey, Chief of the Karakotchi, two powerful Kurd tribes, whose feuds, as frequently reported, have disturbed the peace of the vilayet for several years past.

There would seem reason to hope that this reconciliation will be lasting.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

No. 239.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received November 28.)

(No. 897.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 23, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship, in continuation of my despatch No. 854 of the 8th instant, that I have received a telegraphic report from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van from Mush, stating that he has completed a tour of the distressed district on foot. Captain Tyrrell informs me that there is no actual starvation up to the present, but that the people have no food for the winter, though they have houses and fuel enough. The population numbers 7,500 souls, and they are in immediate need of food to last them for the five winter months.

Captain Tyrrell says that an American missionary from Bitlis is at Mush at the present moment, and that he will distribute relief to the nearer villages if the weather opens, but the heavy snow makes it now impossible to transport foodstuffs to the remoter villages, and that the only means of sending them assistance is by money with which they can buy food from the Kurds. He quite sees the inconveniences of this mode of affording relief, but says that there is no other way now that the season is so far advanced. He has telegraphed to Bitlis to ascertain what funds are available there, and will let me know in due course how much more money is needed.

Captain Tyrrell reports that the Turkish Government have not carried out all their promises in the matter of reinstating the people in their homes, and that practically nothing has been done since he was there in August last, but that the local authorities are not to blame, as they have not been supplied with the necessary funds to enable them to do more.

I have made a strong communication to the Grand Vizier in the sense of Captain Tyrrell's report, and have called his Highness' serious attention to the fact that the population of the distressed district have nothing to live upon during the winter. I have represented to him in forcible language that the Vali of Bitlis has misled the Turkish Government in a most reprehensible way in his recent reports upon the condition of the district, which he stated was satisfactory, and I have reminded Ferid Pasha of his promise to me that he would send money for the relief of the starving people, should I ascertain that it was necessary.

The Grand Vizier at once dispatched a telegram couched in very strong terms to the Vali of Bitlis in the sense desired by me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 240.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 161.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, November 29, 1904.*

ARMENIA: Your despatch No. 872 of the 15th instant, last sentence.

The action recommended as regards Lutfi Bey will be sufficient.

No. 241.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 180.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, December 3, 1904.*

ARMENIAN relief.

With reference to my telegram No. 176 of the 27th ultimo, Captain Tyrrell is pressing for 500*l.* to be sent by telegraph for relief.

Are there any funds available for that purpose in London?

No. 242.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 913.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 29, 1904.*

THE Grand Vizier alluded yesterday to the messages I had sent him, to the effect that Captain Tyrrell, who had returned from a tour of inspection in the distressed districts in the neighbourhood of Moush and Talori, had reported that serious genuine distress calling for immediate relief existed. His Highness said that he had at once telegraphed to the Vali of Bitlis to take all necessary steps to relieve the distress, and had instructed him to depute the Mutessarifs of Moush and Genj to superintend the measures taken. He added that it should, however, be borne in mind that the Armenian inhabitants of the mountains were not accustomed to luxurious circumstances, and that they had had three or four months in which to collect supplies for the winter, and that, if they had not done so, it had been either because they had been too lazy or had counted upon foreign relief. The Turkish authorities also had distributed some 800 Turkish liras among them, and had quite recently furnished further supplies.

I reminded his Highness that the conditions of last summer and the state in which these unfortunate people had found their homes when they had been allowed to return to them were such as precluded all possibility of their making provision for the winter, and I impressed upon him that my reports came from Captain Tyrrell, who, as his Highness had been able to convince himself from a perusal of the recent Blue Book, had been absolutely impartial and fair in all that he had written about the events of the past summer. I had perfect confidence in his statements, as I was sure they would not be exaggerated, and would be based on actual facts learned from a personal examination of existing conditions.

To this Ferid Pasha agreed, and said that he would do what he could, but repeated what he had said on a previous occasion, namely, that these people would always be in want as long as they believed that they were sure of foreign relief.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 243.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 914. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 29, 1904.*

THE Grand Vizier told me yesterday that the Vali of Van had reported that Lutfi Bey, Kaimakam, and Halil Bey, Captain of gendarmerie, whose conduct in connection with the affair at Narek had formed the subject of complaint on my part, were both in prison at Van awaiting judgment. The Vali added that Abdul Ghafur, the outlaw, who had fled from the troops, had been overtaken in a neighbouring village and mortally wounded in a combat which ensued, in consequence of his refusal to surrender, and that he was now in hospital at Van. The report further stated that the stolen property had been restored to the villagers, and that such of their houses and buildings as could be repaired at the present moment had been rebuilt, whilst relief had been distributed to the destitute.

I thanked his Highness for his communication, and expressed my pleasure to hear that energetic measures had been taken, but I warned him that advices which had reached me from reliable sources tended to show that there was much unrest on the frontier, and that the inhabitants of Van greatly feared further incursions of insurgents.

Ferid Pasha replied that similar information had reached him, and that he had in consequence instructed the Turkish authorities at Erzeroum and Van, as well as at other points along the frontier, not to relax their vigilance.

The Turkish Government were aware, he said, that there was considerable unrest among the Armenians of the Caucasus, and that there was grave danger lest the situation might become worse, should Russia put in force her threat to expel from Russian territory next spring all such Armenians as had not accepted Russian nationality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 244.

Anglo-Armenian Association to Sir E. Gorst.—(Received December 5.)

(Private.) 3, *Plowden Buildings, Temple, E.C., December* 3, 1904.

Dear Sir,

IN reply to your letter of to-day, inquiring if 500*l.* could be dispatched to Moush for the relief of distress in that district, I regret to say that, as our Calcutta agency (which mainly supplied charitable contributions) has been closed, it is not possible to make a remittance to Captain Tyrrell.

It would, I fear, be of no practical use, in view of the damaging revelations made in the last published Parliamentary paper, to make any public appeal in this country on behalf of the Armenians at Moush or elsewhere.

I think, however, that it is important to aid Captain Tyrrell in every way possible, and would suggest to Lord Lansdowne the advisability of making known the needs of the Moush people to His Majesty's Consul at Tiflis, in order that the wealthy Armenian merchants in that town and district may be made aware of a sure and safe channel for relieving distress.

Another means of obtaining the required amount would be for His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to privately inform Mgr. Ormanian, the Patriarch of the Armenians, of Captain Tyrrell's despatch, so that the donations of the Armenian merchants in Constantinople could be forwarded direct to that officer, or through the British Embassy.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD ATKIN,
Treasurer.

No. 245.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 417.) *Foreign Office, December* 6, 1904.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 807 of the 23rd ultimo, embodying the substance of a Report from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van as to the distressed condition of the Armenian population in the districts of Moush and Bitlis. I have received this information with much concern. Allowing for all the difficulties of the situation, His Majesty's Government had every reason to believe from the repeated assurances given to you by the Grand Vizier and reported in your despatches Nos. 809, 825, and 841 of the 17th, 22nd, and 31st October and No. 854 of the 8th ultimo, that much more effective steps had been taken for the relief of the sufferers, and that their need for additional assistance would be less urgent.

The representations which you have made to the Grand Vizier on the subject are entirely approved by His Majesty's Government. You cannot too earnestly represent to his Highness the unfavourable effect which will be produced on public opinion in this country if it be found that, contrary to the promises made by him and notwithstanding his instructions, these unfortunate people are being left by the Turkish authorities to perish of starvation and want during the winter.

Your telegram No. 176 of the 27th ultimo has been communicated to the Armenian Relief Committee, who will no doubt take such action as may be in their power to collect and forward funds for relief purposes.

I notice with regret from your despatch No. 874 of the 15th ultimo that, as a result of the Financial Commission recently established at Constantinople, instructions have been sent to suspend local expenditure in the Vilayets of Erzeroum and Kharput, with the object apparently of procuring increased remittances to the Central Government. You should take an opportunity of pointing out to the Grand Vizier that the Turkish Government could not pursue a more unwise policy, and that the suspension or reduction of the salaries of officials and police is obviously calculated to intensify the causes which have so often led to disorders in the past. For the serious consequences that might follow on a recrudescence of disturbances in the Asiatic provinces, the Porte would, under the circumstances, be directly responsible. His Majesty's Government are aware of the heavy liabilities which force upon the attention of the Central Government the need for strict administrative economy throughout the Empire. They desire, therefore, all the more earnestly to reiterate the opinion which they have so often expressed, and the truth of which has been demonstrated by the practical experience of countries confronted by economic problems not dissimilar from those which confront the Turkish Government, that the employment of recognized financial experts to examine in detail and report upon the system of taxation and expenditure in the various vilayets is an essential preliminary to any measures for expanding the revenue or reducing expenditure without a sacrifice of efficiency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 246.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 171.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, December* 7, 1904.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 180 of the 3rd instant, informing me of Captain Tyrrell's request for 500*l.* for relief work in Armenia, the Anglo-Armenian Association, having no funds available themselves, suggest that Captain Tyrrell's report should be communicated privately to the Armenian Patriarch, who might forward direct any donations received in Constantinople.

No reply has as yet been received from the friends of Armenia.

No. 247.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 419.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 7, 1904.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 914, Confidential, of the 29th ultimo, reporting a conversation with the Grand Vizier respecting the situation at Van.

I approve your language to Ferid Pasha on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 248.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 926.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 5, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana on the subject of his recent tour in the Ereğli district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 248.

Vice-Consul Townshend to Mr. Townley.

(No. 47.)

Adana, November 2–4, 1904.

Sir,

PURSUANT to my telegram of this day, I have the honour to report that I returned last evening to the Vice-Consulate, on completion of a journey to Sis, Hadjin, Toumarze, Kaiserieh, Nigdeh and Eregli.

I was able to accomplish some topographical work which I trust will prove useful, but some weeks must elapse before I can work out my notes, &c., into Reports and maps.

I was also able to get some information concerning the Bagdad Railway (which being required by the War Office was one of the principal objects of my journey), and I hope to forward in a few days a Report under that heading.

I was everywhere received with civility and courtesy by the Turkish authorities, and I had no difficulties of any kind except from weather, being delayed several days by snowstorms.

The road between Hadjin and Kaiserieh does not appear to be at all safe for the ordinary traveller, owing to the presence of Circassian robbers. I heard many complaints of people being robbed, and I believe in one recent instance a Turkish Bimbashi was actually held up and robbed of some £T. 200, but I cannot actually vouch for the truth of that story, though I believe it to be true. Personally, I met very many small parties of Circassians, who were invariably armed with rifle, revolver, and knife, and were well mounted, most of them leading second horses.

They said nothing to my party, possibly fearing to molest a foreigner, and also seeing that we were also armed, but they appear to be a scourge to the district. I stayed one night in a Kurdish village at the foot of the Gez Bel, and the inhabitants begged me to obtain the Vali's permission for them to have four Government rifles as a protection against these robbers.

In Kaiserieh the situation, as between Christians and Moslems, seems very unsatisfactory. The former are afraid to venture into the streets alone after sunset, and appear to live in a kind of perpetual fear. The population of Moslems is to Armenians as 5:1.

I do not wish to blindly uphold the Christians, who, I think, are in many cases themselves largely to blame; but of the various towns in this country through which I have now travelled I have found none where the Moslems seem so fanatical and hostile as in Kaiserieh. I have not had occasion to notice it before, the place being not in this vilayet, but in that of Angora. The Christians are afraid even to walk through the Moslem bazaars in the daytime, and even did not like doing so in my company, when they knew no one would touch them. I called upon the Mutessarif, Ismail Hukke; he seemed to be well-meaning, but incapable.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR F. TOWNSHEND, *Captain.*

No. 249.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 933. Very Confidential.)

Constantinople, December 6, 1904.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 913 of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith translation of a telegram from the Vali of Bitlis to the Grand Vizier, reporting upon the measures that he has taken to assist the sufferers from the disturbances which took place last summer in the Mush and neighbouring districts.

This paper has been communicated to me semi-officially but confidentially for my own information.

I am sending substance of this report from the Vali to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, for such observations as he may have to offer, and for communication to Captain Tyrrell, should that officer be still at Mush, which is, however, hardly probable, as he is anxious to return to Van as soon as possible, for fear lest he may find himself cut off from that place by snow.

As I have had the honour to inform your Lordship by telegram, Captain Tyrrell states that a sum of 500*l.* is still required to provide the destitute in the mountains with food until the end of January, and he would like to be able to distribute this money before leaving Mush, if possible. After his departure the task will have to be left to the American missionaries on the spot, and there is always a danger that their efforts may be impeded by the local authorities, who are jealous of foreign private interference, and assert, as is shown in the Vali's telegram, that the distress is not so great as is represented, and that if funds are supplied to the mountaineers for their relief they would be devoted to other purposes. Meanwhile, the Grand Vizier assures me that he has given instructions, to which the Vali's telegram is an answer, that all that is possible must be done to relieve the distress.

The 500*l.* required by Captain Tyrrell is not forthcoming here at the present moment, as neither the American Bible Society not the Armenian Patriarch have any funds in hand for the purpose. The relief promised by the Grand Vizier may or may not be sent, and in any case it is unlikely that it will be sufficient to meet the requirements of the persons in need of assistance.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 249.

Telegram sent by Vali of Bitlis to Grand Vizier.

(Translation.)

November 3 (16), 1904.

I HAVE at once communicated your Highness' instructions to the Mutessarifs of Genj and Mush, and pressed them to carry them out. In his reply, the Mutessarif of Mush stated that, according to the estimates presented, the 288 houses which need repairing in thirteen villages dependent upon the Sandjak of Mush, in order to shelter 5,311 mountaineers, will cost 167,409 piastres. To meet this expense, up to date the sum of 54,386 prs. 30 p. has been already paid. The sum required for these persons' maintenance amounts to 210,000 piastres, of which the amount already spent amounts to 150,212 piastres. The sums needed for the installation and maintenance of the distressed have been paid in proportion to the sums forwarded by the vilayets. In some places the inmates of two or three houses have had to be sheltered in one house, and we are not aware of any one being in a state of destitution; although it is true that, as above stated, the inhabitants of two or three houses are living in one house, none are left shelterless, and, in consequence, when the authorities took measures for the installation of the mountaineers in the plain, on the instigation of foreign officials, these mountaineers insisted on returning to their old quarters, and they did not proceed to sow the grain distributed to them before the season was over, and they refused to do work for which they were paid, namely, the construction of roads, barracks, and towers on the mountains; in a word, the authorities have exerted every effort on their behalf, and the Government has even spent for them thousands of liras* to secure for months and even years their maintenance. They persist, nevertheless, in following the advice of ill-intentioned persons. It is but natural that, if one were to ask any of these 5,000 people what they are in need of, they would say they are in abject misery.

It is impossible to feed even a portion of these people by a municipality whose institutions have not yet been established by law, and it would also not be possible for the Government, after the present season is over, to feed them by the dispatch of cereals to those parts. The only thing which, in the opinion of the local authorities, is practicable is that, a sum having been granted to cover the expenses of their installation and maintenance, which sum, in spite of many applications, has not yet been sent from the vilayets, when this sum is received it should be in part devoted to the purchase and supply of cereals to the houses in which there are women and children, and which have no men over 20 years of age able to work, nor cattle nor effects to dispose of; and as it is evident that the mountaineers are not in that distressed condition in which they are said to be, their representing themselves to be in such a state of misery is due far more to nefarious designs than to assure their maintenance.

The balance of 500,000 piastres for these persons, as reported by the Mutessarif, has not only been remitted by the Vali, and as for the people in the Genj Sandjak the

* 1 lira = £ T. 1.

method in which they have been dealt with is not entirely different from the above, only, as winter has set in in that district, on account of the great distances and the absence of the telegraph, no reply has yet been received, but, in view of the urgent instructions constantly sent, a reply may be expected shortly, and will at once be transmitted.

No. 250.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 938.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 6, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 810 of the 17th October, upon the subject of the youthful Armenian prisoners condemned to various terms of imprisonment at Trebizond for conspiracy, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Longworth, reporting that leprosy has broken out in the prison, which is overcrowded and fever-stricken.

I yesterday brought Mr. Longworth's despatch to the notice of the Grand Vizier, who said that he could do nothing as regards the sentences passed until the Ministry of Justice has made its report. His Highness, however, at once sent a telegram to Trebizond to inquire into the circumstances, and to order that all necessary measures should be taken to check the disease and improve the sanitary condition of the prison.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 250.

Consul Longworth to Mr. Townley.

(No. 19.)
Sir, *Trebizond, November 25, 1904.*

WITH reference to your despatch of the 17th October, I regret to report that leprosy has broken out in the Trebizond jail, and that several of the young Armenian prisoners have contracted the disease.

I am urging the authorities to segregate the healthy from the unhealthy, and they are endeavouring to do so. No suitable building is, however, available for the purpose, and it cannot therefore be done very thoroughly. Not only is the prison hospital full of typhoid cases, but the prison itself, which can only hold 400, has already 600 inmates huddled together in the midst of the disease. Government offices will have to be converted, therefore, into hospital wards.

The fathers and mothers of the Armenian lads are naturally most anxious and much distressed. They beg me to convey to you their gratitude for what you have already done, and to implore you not to let the matter drop.

Would it be possible, may I ask, to obtain the pardon and release of the less guilty of the young men on the eve, at latest, of their Christmas day?

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 251.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 185.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, December 12, 1904.*

RELIEF of distress in Armenia.

With reference to your Lordship's telegrams Nos. 171 and 175 of the 7th and 10th instant respectively, the Armenian Patriarch has no funds available.

I do not consider it advisable that Captain Tyrrell should longer delay his return to Van, and am therefore authorizing him to proceed there. Arrangements will be made by him for distribution, through Peet, of money sent by "Friends of Armenia." The Sublime Porte have signified their concurrence and their willingness to render further assistance in relief.

No. 252.

Foreign Office to "Friends of Armenia."

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 14, 1904.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 8th instant, I am directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to inform you that a telegram has been received from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople stating that Captain Tyrrell will make arrangements for the distribution of the 250*l.* provided by your Committee for the relief of distress in the district of Moush.

Mr. Townley adds that the Turkish Government concur in this arrangement, and have promised further assistance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 253.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 425.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 16, 1904.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 938 of the 6th instant, forwarding a report from Mr. Longworth respecting an outbreak of leprosy among the Armenian prisoners at Trebizond, and stating that you had brought the matter to the notice of the Grand Vizier.

I approve your language to Fehrid Pasha on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

No. 254.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 948.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 13, 1904.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 846 of the 1st ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting steps taken to carry out the measures resulting from the formation of the new Financial Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Inclosure in No. 254.

Consul Richards to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 54.)
Sir, *Damascus, November 14, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Mustapha Tewfik Bey, the Defterdar of this vilayet, has been dismissed from his post for peculation and malversation charges, which are undoubtedly well founded. His functions are being temporarily performed by the Emlak Mudiri.

I should mention, in this connection, that very great pressure is being brought to bear on all those who are still in debt to the State for arrears of taxes, the prison being full of persons who are either unable or unwilling to satisfy the claims of the authorities

in this respect. I am informed that not only is payment being demanded from persons who are confessedly indebted to the fisc themselves, but they are being made to pay for absent relatives whom, in many cases, they have not seen for years, and with whom, beyond the mere fact of the relationship existing between them, they have nothing whatever to do. I hear on very good authority that there are several persons so situated now in prison owing either to their unwillingness or inability to satisfy the official demands, and undoubtedly public indignation is beginning to make itself heard in no uncertain tones.

The official eagerness to obtain money, and that speedily at all costs, is to be explained largely by the fact that, in addition to the usual Bairam payments which will shortly have to be made, there are the expenses of the Hadj, the Damascus quota of which is put at £ T. 40,000. They are, or rather were, until quite lately, at their wits' ends to know how this large sum was to be raised. As a matter of fact, I have received reliable information to the effect that in all probability the Ottoman Bank here will come to the rescue as usual; but not only were the authorities unaware of the possibility of such a contingency when they first opened the tax-collecting campaign, but they were rather given to understand that it was in the highest degree improbable.

As regards the collection of arrears of taxes, the difficulty in very many cases is the absolute impossibility for the debtor to pay what is demanded of him, simply because the accumulation extending over many years of even a small tax has resulted ultimately in an amount the payment of which is far beyond his means. The worst offenders are often rich men, who owe their exemption from taxation in the past to the fact of their wealth and influence. Two instances have been quoted to me where £ T. 1,000 are due to the fisc for arrears of taxes in each case; but such is the influence enjoyed by these persons (rich Moslem Notables) that it is in the highest degree improbable that they will be compelled to pay what they owe, the authorities preferring to throw into prison and wring the last para from some poor wretch (either Christian or Jew) who has neither friends nor protectors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 255.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 955. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 13, 1904.*

I HAVE the honour to report, with reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 417 of the 6th instant, that I yesterday again called the attention of the Grand Vizier to the state of affairs in the Moush district, and told his Highness that your Lordship had received with much concern Captain Tyrrell's Reports of the distressed condition of the population, which showed that, in spite of all his promises and assurances, the instructions he had given had not been properly executed. I impressed upon him most earnestly that the worst possible impression would be made upon public opinion in England should it be ascertained later on that the unfortunate people had been left to perish of starvation during the winter. I added that Captain Tyrrell must now return to Van, but that before leaving he would leave directions with the American missionaries on the spot for the distribution of 250*l.* that had been sent from London, and of various sums that had been procured from other sources, and that I should count upon his Highness to see that no obstacle was put in their way.

Ferid Pasha agreed to this, and said that he also was sending more money. He expressed his belief that the distress was not so acute as had been represented, and asserted that the villagers had hidden their stores in wells and other hiding-places during Captain Tyrrell's visits. He promised to communicate to me a copy of a further Report received from the Vali of Bitlis, which showed that things were in a satisfactory condition, and he assured me that if I could still tell him, after I had read it and had received Captain Tyrrell's Report, that there was distress he would see to it.

I replied that it was unlikely that Captain Tyrrell had been much imposed upon by the villagers, as he knew them so well, and his Highness had been able to assure himself from a perusal of his Reports published in the last Blue Book that he is thoroughly impartial.

I have received the Report from the Vali of Bitlis to which Ferid Pasha referred. It contains nothing new, and merely repeats in more optimistic language what he said in his previous Report, of which translation was forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 933 of the 6th instant, namely, that all that is possible has been done for the people of the Moush and Talori districts, and that there is not a single soul of them left shelterless.

I thought I detected a change in the Grand Vizier's tone when speaking of Captain Tyrrell yesterday, and he seemed pleased to hear that he was returning to Van. This I attribute to the fact that the Vali of Bitlis has sent in a false Report, stating that he has been distributing £T. 2 a-piece to each Armenian of the villages he has visited, has been asking them improper questions as to whether they are satisfied with the Government, and has been listening to exaggerated statements.

I understand that Mr. Peet, of the American Missions, has just dispatched 600*l.*, including the 250*l.* received from the "Friends of Armenia," to Moush for the purposes of relief. About 1,000*l.* has been already distributed. The money thus provided should suffice, according to Captain Tyrrell's estimate, to supply food for the people till February or longer, but more will be required before the end of the winter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 256.

Mr. Townley to the Marquess of Lansdowne.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 956.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 13, 1904.*

I SPOKE to the Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday in the sense of your Lordship's despatch No. 417 of the 6th instant as to the reductions in local expenditure in the Asiatic Provinces of Turkey which had been reported to His Majesty's Government. I pointed out to his Excellency that the reduction of the salaries of officials and police could not fail to intensify the causes of disorder which have occurred in the past, and that the Porte would have to be held responsible for any recrudescence of disorders which might ensue. I explained to his Excellency that financial reforms, to be efficacious and salutary, can only be carried out after the system of taxation and expenditure has been carefully examined into and reported upon by experts.

Tewfik Pasha, who will submit my communication to the Grand Vizier, said that His Majesty's Government must have been erroneously informed, since there could be no possible intention of permanently reducing salaries which were already too small. It had been decided to suppress a few minor posts which had been found to be superfluous, and the measures taken had been most carefully examined.

I replied that the information had come from thoroughly good sources, upon which His Majesty's Government could confidently rely.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

No. 257.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Townley.

(No. 442.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 31, 1904.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 955, Confidential, of the 13th instant, recording your conversation with the Grand Vizier on the present state of affairs in the Moush district.

I approve the language which you used to his Highness on the occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

APPENDIX.

Memorandum by Mr. Lister respecting Armenia.

DURING the month of February last reports were received from His Majesty's Consular officers at Erzeroum and Bitlis with regard to the serious state of unrest prevailing among the Armenians in the Moush and Sassun districts, and the probability of an attack being made by the Turkish authorities upon the Armenian revolutionaries, supposed to be in considerable numbers in the district of Sassun. Sir N. O'Conor, No. 166, March 12, 1904.

His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople drew the attention of the Turkish Government to the danger of any ill-considered action on their part which might cause a recrudescence of the Armenian revolutionary activity.

On the 11th March Sir Nicholas O'Conor had an opportunity of speaking to the Sultan on this subject. He explained to His Majesty how great was the anxiety caused by the arrangements then being made for the concentration of a large military force at Moush, with the object of proceeding against the revolutionary bands which had crossed the frontier. He submitted to His Majesty the expediency of endeavouring to negotiate peaceably with the chief men of the Sassun and Moush districts and of offering a general amnesty, provided they quietly agreed to allow the revolutionary leaders to be expelled from the country.

The Sultan remarked that this idea seemed to him deserving of consideration, and that it had already crossed his mind.

On the following day the Armenian Patriarch was summoned to the Palace, and was informed by the Sultan's First Secretary that there were in Moush and Sassun some 400 revolutionaries, only fifty of whom were believed to have come from Persia or the Caucasus, while the rest were natives of the country; that the Sultan was anxious that the state of unrest resulting from the presence of these persons should be put an end to without unnecessary bloodshed, and, if possible, without recourse to military action. His Majesty consequently invited the Patriarch to instruct his subordinates at Moush to enter into negotiations with the revolutionaries, with a view to persuading them to disperse and return to their homes, on the understanding that they should be amnestied and secured from further molestation. Sir N. O'Conor, No. 176, March 16, 1904.

The Patriarch suggested that a military officer should accompany his emissaries in their attempts to negotiate, in order to show that the mission was authorized by the Imperial Government, but this suggestion was set aside.

Instructions were subsequently sent by the Patriarch to the ecclesiastical authorities in Moush and its neighbourhood in the sense of the above invitation.

In the event of the miscarriage of these negotiations, Sir N. O'Conor suggested that His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government might offer the services of their Consular officials on the spot as intermediaries, with a view to bring about an amicable arrangement between the Armenians and the Turkish Government.

On the 23rd March, Lord Lansdowne saw the Russian Ambassador and informed him of the reports received from His Majesty's Ambassador and of Sir Nicholas O'Conor's suggestion for Consular mediation, at the same time giving him a Memorandum of the facts recorded above. His Lordship said that it was, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, clearly desirable that, if the British Consul took any action in the matter, he should do so in co-operation with his Russian colleague. Count Benckendorff said that he would have much pleasure in referring Lord Lansdowne's proposal to St. Petersburgh. To Sir N. O'Conor No. 148 A, March 23, 1904.

Sir Nicholas O'Conor subsequently suggested that, should the idea of Consular mediation be approved, it would be advisable also to consult with the French Government. Sir N. O'Conor, No. 180, Telegraphic, March 17, 1904.

On the 5th April Sir N. O'Conor telegraphed that the Armenian revolutionaries rejected the mediation of the Armenian Bishops, on the ground that the guarantee was insufficient for the fulfilment of the Sultan's promises of amnesty. Sir N. O'Conor No. 63, Telegraphic, April 5, 1904.

They, however, professed their readiness to lay down their arms if the promises were made through the foreign Consuls, and it appeared that they had made overtures in that sense to the Russian Consul at Erzeroum.

To Sir N. O'Conor, No. 62, Telegraphic, April 6, 1904.

Lord Lansdowne consequently consulted the French and Russian Ambassadors as to the possibility of Consular mediation. Count Benckendorff once more referred to St. Petersburgh for instructions, but M. Cambon said that the French Government agreed to the proposal and were prepared to send the necessary instructions to their Consuls on learning that the British Consuls had been similarly instructed. Sir N. O'Conor was consequently authorized to consult his Russian and French colleagues on the subject.

To Sir N. O'Conor, No. 66, Telegraphic, April 12, 1904.

On the 12th April Lord Lansdowne was informed by Count Benckendorff that the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople had been instructed to confer with Sir Nicholas O'Conor and the French Ambassador with a view to joint action at Moush and Sassun by the Consuls of the three Powers.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 340, May 10, 1904. Sir N. O'Conor, No. 307, April 25, 1904.

In the meantime there appeared to be no improvement in the state of affairs in Armenia. On the 5th April the Vicar-Bishop of Moush was arrested, with all the members of his Council, on the ground of having made "false declarations" (very possibly to His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum with regard to the recent disorders).

He was, however, released on the 9th, and on the 20th, by order of the Vali and with the permission of the Patriarch, he proceeded to Moush, where he met the Bishop of Bitlis, the Vali, the Public Prosecutor, and other civil functionaries, the authorities having decided once more to have recourse to the mediation of the Bishops. Their efforts, however, were once more unavailing, and on the 29th April the Grand Vizier informed the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople that the insurgents, who numbered about 2,000, refused the mediation of the Bishops and had attacked the Turkish troops, of whom they had killed and wounded forty-three. His Majesty's Consuls at Erzeroum and Bitlis, moreover, reported that there had been severe fighting between the insurgents and Kurds, and that twelve or more villages had been burnt.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 76, Telegraphic, April 29, 1904.

In view of the defiant attitude thus adopted by the insurgents Consular mediation for the moment seemed hopeless: it would, moreover, in any case, have been somewhat hampered by the fact that the Russian Consul at Bitlis only left Constantinople for his post on the 29th April.

Sir Nicholas O'Conor continued, in concert with his Russian and French colleagues, to make the most earnest representations to the Grand Vizier, and he received most positive assurances from his Highness that the Turkish Government were doing all in their power to restore order without bloodshed and to restrain the Kurds.

To Sir N. O'Conor, No. 71, Telegraphic, April 23, 1904. Sir N. O'Conor, No. 307, April 25, 1904.

It has been difficult to reconcile the various reports as to the number of Turkish troops concentrated in the Moush and Sassun districts. The Russian Government estimated them at 38,000, this high figure being based upon an apparently exaggerated report of the Russian Consul at Erzeroum which was forwarded by the Governor-General of the Caucasus without verification direct to St. Petersburgh, and which caused considerable apprehension there. According to the reports of His Majesty's Consuls in Armenia, the total force did not number more than 12,000 men; and this estimate was borne out by the Grand Vizier, who informed Sir Nicholas O'Conor about the 24th April that fifteen battalions were under arms and that four more had been ordered to be ready for mobilization in case of need.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 90, Telegraphic, May 16, 1904. Sir N. O'Conor, No. 92, Telegraphic, May 19, 1904.

His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis arrived at Moush on the 15th May, where the French Consul already was. Considerable excitement prevailed there and 1,000 refugees had taken refuge in the town and were in great distress. Three days later he reported that the villages of Semal, Shenik, and Talori, which were occupied by the insurgents, had been captured and burnt by the troops and that several other villages had been destroyed.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 392, May 24, 1904.

It has been difficult to verify the various reports which have been received, but it appears probable that a considerable number of villages have been burnt or destroyed. The Grand Vizier informed Sir N. O'Conor that twelve had been burnt in the Sandjak of Moush and thirteen in the Sandjak of Ghendj. His Highness further stated that neither Kurds nor Bashi-Bazouks had taken part in the conflict and that the destruction was in almost all cases caused by the insurgents themselves.

Sir N. O'Conor replied that this explanation was almost incredible, and further informed him of the rumour which had reached him to the effect that the young women and children had been carried off from the villages by the troops and that only the young and helpless or the aged and infirm inhabitants had taken refuge at Moush. He further represented to him the expediency of making an example of a few Kurds, which was the only way of making them realize that the Central Government was determined to check their brutal proceedings. It seemed, however, as though the policy of the Government was to drive the Armenians from the mountainous districts of Sassun to the Moush plains, where they would be under the eye of the authorities, but at the mercy of the Kurds. His Highness absolutely repudiated any such intention and maintained that the conflict was solely due to the action of the insurgents and that the Vali of Moush was providing food and shelter for the refugees, that the insurrection had been suppressed with comparatively little loss of life, and that the Vali had already started on his return journey to Bitlis.

Mr. Heathcote suggested leaving Moush in view of the fact that his presence there in enforced inaction was more likely to produce a bad than a good effect, seeing that it was impossible for him and his French colleague to enter into negotiations with the bands, in their present depressed and disorganized condition. It was, however, decided that it was better that they should remain there, until they were assured that there was no likelihood of a fresh insurrectionary movement and of renewed military action.

To Sir N. O'Conor, No. 105, Telegraphic, June 7, 1904.

It appeared to His Majesty's Government that a good impression would be created if a British officer were allowed by the Turkish Government to accompany the troops engaged in operations at Sassun. Captain Tyrrell, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, was proposed for this duty, and arrived at Moush on the 19th June.

In the meantime the reports from Mr. Heathcote continued very gloomy, and the number of refugees in Moush steadily increased.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 428, June 6, 1904.

Sir N. O'Conor was ceaseless in his representations to the Grand Vizier, who, however, continued to assert that the Kurds had been absolutely prevented from approaching the seat of the disturbances, and that a large military force had been sent against the insurgents as the best means of preventing bloodshed.

He declared that proofs of an extensive conspiracy had been found, that meetings of revolutionaries had been held at Kars and other places within the Russian frontier, and that some 600 insurgents had crossed into Turkey.

He added that the reports which he received showed that numbers of the insurgents were laying down their arms every day; that an amnesty had been granted to all who did so, and that provision was being made for the destitute who had fled to Moush and other places.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 467, June 15, 1904.

The Russian Consul reached Moush on the 11th June, and joined his British and French colleagues in their discussions and representations to the Turkish authorities.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 459, June 14, 1904.

On the 13th June Sir N. O'Conor again saw the Grand Vizier, and once more impressed upon him the terrible responsibility which would fall upon the Turkish Government should it be proved that the Kurds had been allowed to take part in the recent excesses. He added that it was necessary to prove clearly to these barbarous hordes that the Government disapproved their action and would hold them responsible for them with their lives. As regards the reported design of the authorities to drive the Armenians into the plains, it was necessary that his Highness should give a proof of his reprobation of such a policy; this he could only do by sending orders at once to the Vali to allow all the refugees, who desired to do so, to return to their homes, and to afford them protection and security against the attacks of the Kurds.

His Highness willingly agreed to send notice to the Vali of Bitlis in this sense, adding that if any of the refugees preferred to remain in the plains of Moush they should be equally protected.

Sir N. O'Conor saw the telegram dispatched, and in the evening advised Mr. Heathcote accordingly.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 428, Confidential, June 6, 1904.

The Grand Vizier on more than one occasion complained to Sir Nicholas O'Conor that the Russian officials made no attempt to prevent revolutionaries from crossing the frontier, or from meeting and organizing their bands at Kars and other towns within the Russian frontier.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 536, July 5, 1904.

The personal experience of His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum showed that there was a considerable amount of truth in these reports. On the occasion of a trip to the frontier with his French colleague Mr. Shipley found that the whole question of the passage of revolutionaries was treated as a joke by the Russian frontier officials; that no serious efforts were made to prevent them; and that there appeared some danger of the consequent irritation of the Turkish officers resulting in some reckless outburst.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 517, June 28, 1904.

Sir N. O'Conor pointed out to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires the unfavourable impression that would be created in Europe by the constant passage of insurgents across the frontier, and expressed the hope that the Governor-General of the Caucasus would be instructed to keep a very sharp look-out, and to prevent these bands from entering Turkey.

M. Swetchine replied that the earnest attention of Prince Galitzine had already been called to this matter by the Embassy, and that the Prince had replied that the frontier was long and difficult to guard, and that he was doing all he could to prevent insurgents from crossing it.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 541, July 3, 1904.

Mr. Shipley since reported that the Russian Consul at Erzeroum had stated to several officials in that town that the Russian frontier posts of the second line had been brought up to the front line in order to fill up the gaps, and that the passage of bands was now, therefore, absolutely impossible.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 553, July 11, 1904.

Mr. Shipley seemed rather doubtful as to the truth of this statement, which appeared all the more unlikely in view of the fact that an arrangement was reported to have been made between the Turkish and Russian Governments by which any person, Christian or Moslem, provided with a "carte d'identité" could enter Turkey from the Caucasus and return thither without any time-limit being fixed.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 486, June 21, 1904.

On the 21st June the Grand Vizier informed Sir N. O'Conor that the Council of Ministers had come to the following decisions:—

1. That permission should be granted to the refugees at Moush and other places to return to their homes in Sassun;
2. That £T. 5,000 should be appropriated and sent to the Vali of Bitlis to assist the refugees in rebuilding their houses;
3. That barracks should be built in the neighbourhood of Sassun to protect the Armenians against the predatory raids of the Kurds and to check any revolutionary outbreak at the beginning;
4. That a general amnesty should be granted to all those who surrendered and who were not caught in the actual commission of crime;
5. That an efficient gendarmerie should be reorganized in Bitlis and the neighbouring vilayets, and that an inquiry should be held into the mode and system of administration in order to check existing abuses.

His Highness further said that he had impressed upon Zekki Pasha, the Commander-in-chief of the 4th Army Corps, the importance of keeping the Hamidieh troops well in hand, and stated that about twenty Kurdish Chiefs or leading personages whose presence was considered a danger in the present excited state of public feeling, had been exiled to the Vilayet of Castamuni, where they would be detained for the present.

An Iradé sanctioning these decisions was issued on the same day.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 116, Telegraphic, June 28, 1904.

Mr. Vice-Consul Heathcote telegraphed on the 28th June that the settlement of the refugees in the mountains was proceeding satisfactorily, and that the vilayet was undisturbed.

Sir N. O'Conor No. 544, July 9, 1904.

Captain Tyrrell reported to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the 9th July that he had returned from a visit to the disturbed districts and that no difficulties had been placed in his way by the authorities. He found it difficult to compute the actual loss of life, and was of opinion that it would be difficult to sustain the charge of massacres and atrocities.

The participation of the Kurds was, moreover, not proved, and the orders issued by the authorities undoubtedly were intended to prevent it.

He computed the amount of villages destroyed at thirty-four, but was doubtful as to whether this was not generally the work of the insurgents themselves.

He reported that all was quiet and that the refugees had returned to Gheliguzan, Shenik, Semal, and the six villages of Shattakh. Those of the Akshaser Valley and Talori were still absent, but an official had been sent to resettle them.

Captain Tyrrell stated that the Turkish force encamped in the district consisted of six battalions and four guns; that barracks were being built, and that if the local authorities carried out their orders loyally the refugees should be resettled and the villages restocked before the winter.

He considered it advisable that a Consular officer should visit the Talori and Sassun districts and was instructed to do so himself, and to return to Van viâ Bulalik, where trouble had been reported.

Sir N. O'Conor, No. 579, July 19, 1904.

Mr. Vice-Consul Heathcote reported, in a despatch dated the 6th July, that the condition of affairs had materially improved; that the Turkish authorities were genuinely endeavouring to relieve the immediate wants of the refugees who had returned to their homes; that a suitable official had been appointed to supervise the work of reinstating them in their villages; and that the Vali had promised that the arrest of a notorious Kurd and of several other malefactors should be effected.

(Signed) R. LISTER.

Foreign Office, August 4, 1904.

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